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SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS.

VOL. XXVII. 1946.

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Printed by McCORQUODALE & Co. (SUDAN), Ltd.

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Back numbers are obtainable at the following places: Editorial Secretary, Civil Secretary's Office, Khartoum: The Sudan Agency Wellington House, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1. and the Sudan Bookshop, Khartoum.

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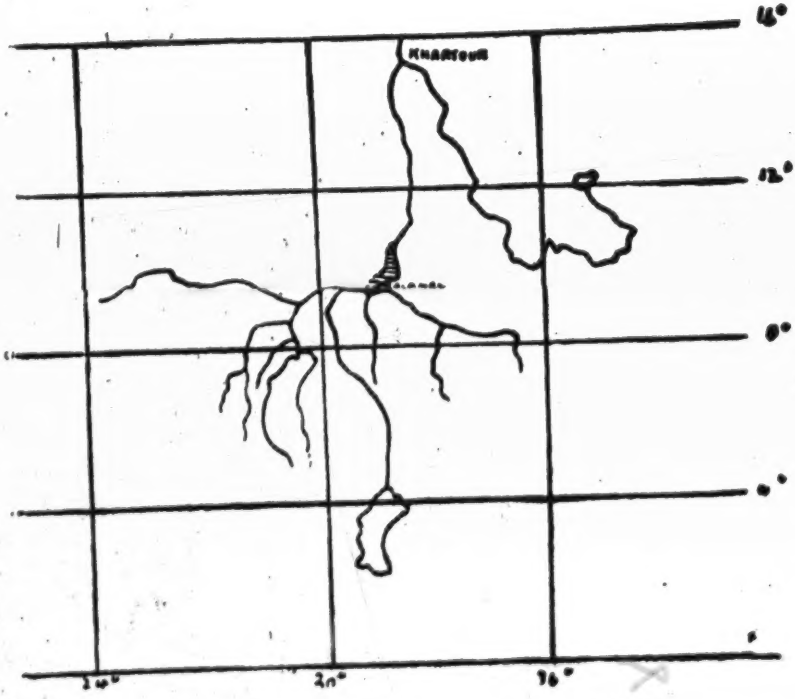

THE SHADED POSITION SHOWS THE TERRITORY OF THE SHILLUK TRIBE.

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THE DEATH OF A RETH OF THE SHILLUK AND THE INSTALLATION OF HIS SUCCESSOR

By P. P. Howell and W. P. G. Thomson

INTRODUCTORY

(P.P.H.)

The Shilluk are a Nilotic tribe who occupy a narrow strip of country mainly along the west bank of the Nile from about Lake No to about Lat. 12° N. They are of the same stock as the Nuer and Dinka tribes who border them to the south and east, but they are more closely related in language, culture and in their mythology to the Anuak,[1] who live along the Baro and Pibor rivers on the frontier of the Sudan and Abyssinia, to the Acholi, Lango, Alur, Jopadola, and the Shilluk-speaking Kavirondo or Jaluo who live as far south as the north-eastern banks of Lake Victoria. Other smaller and more scattered tribes live up the Bahr el Ghazal These tribes have been classified as the Shilluk-speaking group, though there is now little contact between them. Their mythology suggests a common origin and certainly their language is closely allied. The name Shilluk is probably an Arabic version of the word Colo, which is what the Shilluk call themselves.

According to tradition the Shilluk migrated from the south via the Bahr el Ghazal into their present country under the leadership of Nyikang who is their tribal hero and the founder of the present dynasty of Shilluk kings. They conquered and mixed with the original inhabitants, who were probably not a Nilotic people at all, and extended their country by raids and infiltration a good deal north of their present boundaries. Tradition, confirmed by tribes other than the Shilluk and by the Arabs who live north of them, states

1. See Evans-Pritchard "The political system of the Anuak" (Monographs on social anthropology No. 4) 1940.

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173 that Shilluk country once extended as far as Gordon's Tree which is just south of Khartoum. Whether there were Shilluk settlements permanently occupied in that area or whether this represents the furthest point to which they penetrated in raids and hunting parties is not certain.

361 The Shilluk are now a sedentary people and do not have any large scale migration in search of fresh pastures during the dry season. Their permanent villages, built on the high ground close to the Nile, are occupied all the year round, and only the youths go into the cattle camps, which are never more than a few miles from the villages. The cattle camps are mostly situated on islands and dried out watercourses which run parallel to the river.

173 631 Territorially the country is divided into two great provinces Gerr and Luak. (Note 1) These two provinces are again divided into further divisions, the functional meaning of which is difficult to discover, but which retain according to Shilluk tradition a vague feeling of mutual co-operation in times of stress. These divisions were made by order of Nyikang. In most cases these divisions have been utilized by the Government for administrative purposes. Finally the country is divided into a large number of settlements, which are made up of [614] many villages. Shilluk clans are not territorial in basis for distinct lineages of one clan may live in many and widely separated settlements. The largest unit exclusively occupied by a kinship group is [621] the village or *bac*.[2]

615 614 644 The Shilluk people are divided into four main classes or groups of clans.

(i) The Kwareth, the royal clan who trace descent from Nyikang and from whom the *reth*[3] is chosen.

(ii) The Ororo, a disinherited branch of the royal house, who do not differ from commoners except in the special functions

2. See P. P. Howell, "The Shilluk Settlement": *S.N.R.* XXIV. 1941.

3. The word *reth* has often been translated as "king." We prefer to use the Shilluk term throughout.

For Notes see pp. 75 ff.

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ANEI KUR, RETH OF THE SHILLUK.

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they perform in connection with the *reth*. They are a distinct clan. 565 614 [644]

(iii) The Colo—the name refers collectively to the main body of Shilluk clans (*kwa*), of which there are a large number — trace descent patrilineally from (a) the original followers of Nyikang, (b) those individuals of other tribes who have migrated and settled in Shilluk country from early times onwards and (c) those who are lost in antiquity, but who may have been the people who occupied Shilluk country before the arrival of Nyikang: their traditions certainly confirm this

(iv) The Bang Reth, the personal attendants of the *reth*, his wives or wives of the past *reths*, which are in many case inherited by the successor, and the descendants of the royal slaves obtained by capture from those who volunteer to serve the *reth* by reason of their possession by the spirit of Nyikang, or paupers who volunteer to serve him in order to exist at all, and those persons who were enslaved because their brothers committed homicide 565 567 644

There is no real caste distinction between the Kwareth and Colo. Moreover the Kwareth are themselves a patrilineal clan and therefore exogamous, and there is no mutual ban on marriage between them and the main body of the people, except in the case of the *reth*'s daughters, who are not allowed to marry at all. The Kwareth, however by reason of their connection with Nyikang and previous *reths* are treated with special respect. 565 614 644 [582]

The Shilluk have less cattle than their Nuer and Dinka neighbours and being predominantly sedentary rely more upon agricultural products. Apart from cultivation—almost entirely millet—and the milk and meat from their cattle, the Shilluk supplement their diet with fish and they have the reputation among other tribes of being exceptionally skilled fishermen. Except for the more permanent territorial basis of their settlements, the basic social structure is very 105

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similar to that of the Nuer and Dinka. They have, however, an established and theoretically omnipotent monarchy, of which there is no counterpart among their more democratic Nilotic neighbours, and which shows more definite and developed principles than those found in the institution of kings among the Anuak and chiefs among the Acholi. Whether this established and institutionalized monarchy is the result of diffusion from elsewhere or a natural and spontaneous development from the politico-religious functionaries who exist in embryo form among other Shilluk-speaking peoples is a controversial subject, which we do not propose to discuss here.[4]

Shilluk Religion and the Tradition of Nyikang.

The all-powerful being who exists in the minds of the Shilluk as a remote and amoral diety is called Juok. Juok is the Shilluk conception of God and is present to a greater or lesser degree in all things. Juok is the explanation of the unknown, the reassuring justification of all the supernatural phenomena, good or bad, of which life is made up. The principal medium through whom Juok is approached is Nyikang. The distinction between them is not clear. Nyikang is Juok, but Juok is not Nyikang, for Nyikang is also a mythological figure who takes his place as the hero-leader of Shilluk tradition. He is also the first *reth* of the Shilluk and the founder of the royal house. Further the soul of Nyikang is reincarnate in every Shilluk *reth*, and thus exists both in the past and the present Nyikang is the *reth*, but the *reth* is not Nyikang. This paradox of the unity yet separation of the three is not easy to define. The Shilluk themselves would find it difficult to explain. Juok, Nyikang, and the *reth* represent the line through whom divinity runs, a conception which may be expressed as an analogy to the ancestor cult, only the cult is symbolic of the tribe as a whole rather than of the Kwareth alone or other individual kinship groups. The *reth* is clearly himself the medium through whom both Nyikang and, more vaguely, Juok are approached, and is the human intercessor of mankind with God. Voluntarily by

4. See C. G. Seligman, *Egypt and Negro Africa*. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd. (1934). p. 60.

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ritual acts, involuntarily by reason of his very existence, the *reth* affects the fortunes and fertility of the tribe and controls the natural phenomena which react upon crops and cattle. The *reth* is therefore the central figure of tribal religion as much as he is the actual symbol of political unity. He is responsible for their welfare and fortunes both spiritually as the present manifestation of Nyikang and temporally as the leading tribal authority. No Shilluk would seriously dispute the *reth's* divine attributes (unless a follower of some alien religion) though some might resist his more mundane powers.

The genealogy of the royal house of the Shilluk goes back for fourteen generations, but Fafiti Yor, who ruled the Shilluk since 1917, was the 29th *reth* because in many cases the succession has passed to brothers of the same generation or even back a generation to an uncle. This is clear from the genealogy recorded by Hoffmeyer and adopted by Seligman and Pumphrey. (*Vide* Appendix IV).

The main factors governing the succession of Shilluk *reths* are these:

1. That only the son of a *reth* who has ruled the Shilluk is eligible. More distant relatives have no claim. The son of a *reth* is entitled *nyireth* in Shilluk.

2. That it is recognized that a *nyireth* may at any time attempt to usurp the throne after killing the *reth*.

3. For this reason the *reth's* sons or sons of previous *reths* are always potentially in opposition to the ruling *reth*, and they are not allowed within the confines of Fashoda at night. Theoretically at any rate, the *reth* must take every precaution to avoid this danger. For example it is never known in which of the many huts he sleeps at night; he is said to move from one to another, and prowls round Fashoda at night if he suspects a marauder. The new *reth* Anei showed us some spears with a special black finish, which he had imported from Dinka country, and

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643 which he said were for his personal use at night, since they would not glint and reveal his movements.

[644 591] 4. All sons of *reths* are brought up in a village away from Fashoda (either their mother's or that of some Shilluk chief who has agreed to adopt them), and there lead a somewhat secluded life.

The king or *reth* of the Shilluk is a classic example of Frazer's conception of a divine king. The argument resolves itself into the following essentials :-

1. The king has power over nature, which may be exerted voluntarily or involuntarily.
2. He is considered the dynamical centre of the universe.
3. Hence the well-being of the universe depends upon his actions and the course of his life ; both must therefore be carefully regulated.

The fourth essential, which Frazer stresses later in the third edition of the *Golden Bough*, is that of ' king killing.' By this he means that the physical condition of the king reacts upon the fortunes of his people and must not be impaired. Therefore, if the king shows signs of senility or physical imperfection, he must be removed, and a successor substituted.[5] The only way to remove him is to kill him. Among the Shilluk there is abundant and current evidence of the first three essentials both in the regulations which control the *reth's* life and the rites and ceremonies performed at his installation. There is evidence also of ' king killing.' There are in fact two forms of ' king killing ' among the Shilluk :-

(i) According to tradition the *reth* may be strangled or suffocated by his wives if he fails to satisfy them, or shows signs of illness or senility, which may effect the welfare of the tribe. This is supported by tradition only.

5. See C. G. Seligman, *Egypt and Negro Africa*, p. 4.

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(ii) The *reth* may, at any time, be killed by a rival claimant to the throne. This is clear from tradition and is supported by the current evidence of the extraordinary precautions taken to avert possible attack during his lifetime, especially during the installation, and from the more recent events of Shilluk history. 643

These two forms of 'king killing' are not quite the same thing. The first is motivated by a desire to avoid the national consequences of the *reth's* waning physical powers upon the people as a whole. The second is motivated by the desire of a rival claimant to seize the *reth* ship. There is, however, a connection between the two, since the rival—always the son of a *reth*—will have more chance of success if the *reth* is unpopular because of tribal disasters which are attributed to his physical deterioration.

In September 1943, *reth* Fafiti Yor of the Shilluk, who had held office for twenty six years, died. That same year Anei son of *reth* Kur was elected his successor, and was finally installed at the capital of Shilluk *reths*, Fashoda, in March 1944. The late Professor Seligman speaking on the subject of divine kingship[6] said, "If it be permissible to speculate on the deeper significance of the beliefs and ceremonies I have described, more weight should, I suspect, be given to the complicated installation ritual of the Divine King than has hitherto been the case. In the past there has been an over emphasis on his ceremonial death. It is for future research to unravel the many emotional trends woven into the installation and rejuvenation ceremonies. For it is in these especially that the emotional projection upon the Divine King of his people's deepest desires for life, fertility, and prosperity find their clearest expression."

Our purpose here has been to record as accurately as possible all the ceremonial, all the diverse ritual and the public events which took place to ensure that Fafiti was safely laid to rest and his soul conducted peacefully to a new status in the ancestral hierarchy of the royal house, and to establish his successor firmly upon the throne. 121 643

6. *loc. cit.*, p. 61

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123 643 Our task has not been easy. It was almost impossible—particularly during the more public events which were attended by thousands of Shilluk—to observe all the individual ritual acting which occurred, often simultaneously. The scene was set from Kwomo to Tonga—a distance of about 16o miles—and the whole tribe entered into the spirit of the occasion. Moreover, it was not seemly to interrogate the performers while the ceremonies were going on. Thus, while in many cases we observed behaviour, ritual and emotional 124 attitudes displayed by individuals or crowds, we were not able to 643 interrupt to demand an explanation from the participants. Most of the onlookers knew little more than we did, though the events had to them an accepted meaning in the context of tradition stamped on [88] their minds from birth, but only vaguely so, for Shilluk tradition rests in the minds of the elders. In a series of ceremonies, which are [514] carried out by many clans each with its peculiar duties to perform, each man knows with any degree of accuracy only the part that he must play. Subsequent interrogation was often sterile. Sometimes the Shilluk do not know, sometimes tradition exists only as such and the meaning is lost in antiquity. Interest after the event—at the time roused to a high pitch of emotional excitement—soon dies down. Answers were therefore often evasive, contradictory and even misleading.

128 643 Subsequent events, prolonged leave in England, accumulated administrative duties, etc., have made it difficult, if not impossible, to pursue our investigations. The installation of Anei Ker is three years past, and the results of our observations must be published now at the risk of criticism. We have omitted in many cases to explain fully the meaning of the varied forms of ritual, and failed to include a full description of the origin and significance of the many sacred and material objects used. At this stage of our investigations it would be misleading to speculate too deeply into those things about which our knowledge is far from complete.

643 It is not easy to draw conclusions, but certain facts are abundantly clear :-

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1. Since the well-being of the Shilluk tribe depends so necessarily on the very existence of the *reth* and every action he takes, the death of a *reth* and the installation of a successor must be most carefully regulated by ritual and religious observances. 643

2. The occasion demands strict observance of all the rites and ceremonies necessary to carry the tribe no less than their figure-head from one status to another. A false step will cause disaster to the tribe.

3. The period of the interregnum is one of intense danger for the Shilluk tribe. Spiritually it is dangerous, because there is no human symbol of tribal cohesion. The *reth* is "out of status"; the whole tribe is in a like position. The soul of Nyikang is without a home. The newly appointed *reth* will later incarnate the spirit of Nyikang, but he does not yet possess fully the divine attributes which have the effect among his people of stabilizing his position. To the Shilluk the political situation also is full of potential danger because civil war may break out at any moment over the choice of a successor. Even after the new *reth* has been appointed by the traditional college of chiefs, his life is endangered and every effort must be made to safeguard him. [715] [669]

4. Therefore each stage in the burial and installation ceremonies successfully concluded is yet another crisis passed. Emotional tension is manifest throughout—a rise and fall of political and religious feeling until the final climax is reached when the new *reth* is confirmed in his position by the homage of the temporal heads of the country. Although the Sudan Government did not intervene either in the choice of the new *reth* or in the form or timing of the events, the Shilluk knew well enough that no blood-shed would be tolerated. How much greater than must [781] [648]

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643 this emotional tension and political excitement have been in the past.

5. Although many of the Shilluk treated the ceremonies light-heartedly and on occasions with much laughter, deep in their hearts was a profound respect for their own religious beliefs and a feeling of awe at the presence of Nyikang.

[781]

6. Despite the stormy path of recent Shilluk history in which *reths* were assassinated, hanged and exiled by an alien government, and despite the disintegrating influences of civilization, the continuity of tradition and the pious attempt to follow it was remarkable.[1]

[178]

182 643 648 7. The songs and ceremonies were characterized by a marked anti-Dervish attitude which dates back to the persecution of the Shilluk and their rulers by the followers of the Mahdi. The facts show that these attacks increased rather than weakened the unity of the tribe and indeed, strengthened the institution of the *reth* as the symbol of tribal cohesion in the face of opposition.

104 It is sometimes difficult to translate Shilluk terms accurately and concisely into English. Original Shilluk terminology is therefore used extensively in the text. The following Shilluk terms are consistently employed:—

Reth: The "king" of the Shilluk.

Nyireth: A son (or daughter) of a *reth*.

Kwa: Literally "descendants of", refers to a clan and precedes the name of the clan. Thus *Kwa Okelo* "the descendants of Okelo", *Kwa Reth* "the descendants of the *Reth*."

Nyikang and Dak: Tribal heroes of the Shilluk. The first king of the Shilluk and his son.

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1. Cf. P. Munro. "Installation of the Reth of the Choi." *S.N.R.* Vol. 1. pp. 145 ff. (and reproduced in full in C. G. Seligman. *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan*. Appendix I.)

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In Part III the effigies of these kings are referred to simply as Nyikang and Dak, for they are thus referred to by the Shilluk. 104

Mudir—the Turkish governor of a province, still used in Arabic for a provincial governor.

Khor—Arabic for watercourse; commonly used in the Sudan.

N.B. In the spelling of Shilluk words the sound Ch is represented by "c" in accordance with the agreement made at the Rejaf Language Conference. [194]

Recent Shilluk History.

(W.P.G.T.)

From the time when the Turkish Government first occupied Kodok, and called it Fashoda[a] in 1867, the history of the *rethship* has been disturbed; successions have either produced large factions and revolts among the Shilluk, or else successive governments have had to step in to avert major civil war within the tribe. 175 643

During the time of the Turkish regime, the Mahdia, and the early years of the present government, the position of the reigning *reth* was always insecure; he was at any time liable to be ambushed and killed by an ambitious *nyireth*, who fancied his chances of gaining the support of the tribe, and becoming *reth*, in accordance with Shilluk tradition; but he was also liable to be the victim of informations laid against him to the authorities, and to be deposed, or killed by government.

Reth Kwathker, who was reigning at the time of the Turkish occupation, was deposed by the *mudir* of Fashoda on a suspicion of disloyalty, (Note 2) and replaced by a nominee Ajang Nyidhok, who was never accepted by the southern Shilluk. This produced civil war

a. Fashoda the capital of the *reth* is actually 13 miles upstream of Kodok.

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175 693 between the north and the government on the one side and the south on the other. Kwathker was captured and died in chains in Fashoda gaol. Ajang Nyidhok, who had never been tribally installed, was soon deposed also on ground of disloyalty, and the *reth*ship was abolished by the *mudir*.

The experiment of administering the Shilluk without a *reth* did not work, and the troubles of the government were if anything increased. After a massacre of government troops at Kaka in 1875, the experiment was given up, and Kweikwon, a son of *reth* Kwathker was appointed *reth*. Some five years later in 1881, Kweikwon went on an expedition with the *mudir* of Fashoda to attack the Mahdi at Jebel Gadir in the eastern Nuba Mountains. The force was annihilated, and Kweikwon and the *mudir* were both killed.

An interregnum then occurred, until Yor Akoc, having gone to El Obeid and received the blessing of the Mahdi, installed himself in Fashoda. Relations with the Mahdi, however, and his sucessor, the Khalifa Abdullahi, did not long remain cordial. The Shilluk people were expected to provide corn and slaves in abundance, and when *reth* Yor failed to do so willingly, the wrath of the Khalifa descended upon him. The Emir Zeki Tummal set up a fort near Kodok, and ravaged the Shilluk country from top to bottom, eventually capturing *reth* Yor near Tonga and beheading him in the Dervish camp.

Kur Nyidhok, a first cousin of Kwathker, threw in his lot with the Emir, and went to Omdurman to pay homage to the Khalifa, who confirmed him as *reth*, and called him Abd el Fadil. While Kur was away in Omdurman, Akol, a son of Kwathker, raised a faction, and after a struggle, was prevented by the northern Shilluk from installing himself in Fashoda. *Reth* Kur lasted till 1903, when he was deposed by the present government on the grounds that his rule was unjust and oppressive; he may have been a victim of slanderous reports sent in to Kodok by eligible *nyireth*.

He was replaced by Fadiet, a son of Kwathker, a government nominee.

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Fadiet died in 1917, and once more the Shilluk were divided between Fafiti Yor and Coti the son of the Turkish puppet Ajang, with the south supporting the latter; the government, had to intervene and instal and protect Fafiti by force. 175 643

From this short account it can readily be seen that the customary procedure of the *reth's* election had not taken place undisturbed for nearly one hundred years and perhaps much longer.

The effect of this stormy history in 1943 made it very difficult for the elders to remember what the procedure was in all the details. There was a constant urge to get back to the old tradition, but often quite important items were omitted or forgotten, and had to be done at the last minute in a hurry. Not even Shilluk custom stands still; it varies with the capacities of people's memories and also it is affected by outside influences. It is not a hard and fast pattern into which everything must fit. The Shilluk would like it to be, but are not always equal to the task. Certain aspects of the traditional ceremonies cannot now take place; it is no longer practicable to keep up the traditions of Dak, the son of Nyikang and great Shilluk conqueror. For example in days gone by, two subsections of the Shilluk, Akwabai near Fashoda and Abuor near Kaka, used to raid north to get the various things required in the ceremonies for the installation of the *reth*. There is now a tendency to buy these things in Kosti market. 178 643

The events which we describe fall in to four main periods:— 643

1. The death and burial of *reth* Fafiti Yor and the funeral dances held for him.
2. The election of Anei Kur.
3. The formal installation of *reth* Anei in Fashoda.[9]
4. Subsequent events which have occurred after his installation, which were motivated by a desire to confirm the *reth*, and which throw light on the nature and function of the Shilluk monarchy.

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9. During the ceremonies of installation we were ably assisted by other observers, notably Mr. John Longe and the Rev. D. McClure.

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PART I.—DEATH AND BURIAL OF RETH FAFITI YOR.

643 *Reth* Fafiti Yor had been unwell for a month or two before September 1943, but custom did not permit him to acknowledge the fact, or tell people about it. The news of his illness became public early in September. He was being attended by a Shilluk medical assistant, but it was evident that his illness was becoming more serious and was not as simple as had been hoped. In the middle of the month the *reth* was visited by a British doctor, who diagnosed an internal obstruction, which might or might not be cancer. The *reth* did not wish to come to Malakal hospital, and the doctor saw no good reason to persuade him. He decided that he should stay under observation for a month. Some days later news began to come in that his condition was much worse; and in the afternoon of the 21st a message arrived in Malakal that the *reth* was unlikely to last the night. In fact, by the time the message arrived the *reth* was dead.

[195] *Piny bugon* "There is no land—the Shilluk country has ceased to be."

766 The day after the *reth* died he was laid in state in the house in Fashoda where he had passed away. The body lay on a mattress on its right side shrouded in white cloth. Some eight or nine women [237 293] were fanning the corpse with fans made from the wings of wild geese. [644] The women were the daughters of the *reth* and the daughters of *reth* Fadiet. None of the *reth's* wives were there. Two small gourds of water were placed by the knees of the body. The part of the house in which the body lay was screened off by grass mats made by the *reth's* wives some three feet high, and above the mat was a curtain of white cloth, which was drawn aside for people as they paid their last respects. There were no signs of mourning or wailing in Fashoda.

The next night the body of the *reth* was carried secretly to Golbainy five miles north of Fashoda, where it was at once buried in the *reth's* private village in the house of his senior wife. It is traditional for the *reth's* body to be sealed into a Shilluk house near Fashoda and not buried for a year after his death. *Reth* Fafiti on his deathbed expressed

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a wish to be buried at once, as his father *reth* Yor had been buried at once after being executed by the Dervishes. 766

The grave of a *reth*, and of all *kwareth*, is a shaft dug in the ground with a cavity cut in the bottom of one side to form a vault. After the body is placed in the vault, it is shut off with stakes and the shaft filled up with earth.

Some few days before he died the *reth* was baptised a Christian. [177] It is possible that his conversion affected the cermonial connected [177] with his death; the absence of his many wives from the ceremonies, and his request to be buried at once and not in accordance with traditional custom suggest this.

The *reth* is looked upon by the Shilluk as responsible for their prosperity, and his strength in their eyes causes the Shilluk, their crops and their herds, and the fish and hippopotamus in their river to increase. 643 In times of famine or cattle plague, at once the Shilluk begin to feel that the *reth* is losing his powers. For two years prior to 1943 the [731] Shilluk crops had been very poor. In 1942-43 the crops were worse than ever, and wholesale deaths from famine were only averted by large scale grain imports by the government. After the previous famine, which lasted for three years ending in 1935, the *reth* had become seriously ill. This time he was an old man, and knowing his responsibilities to the Shilluk, and feeling his physical powers failing owing to his illness, he doubtless lost the will to live, and wanted to die. Whether he was ceremonially strangled, as is traditional for *reths* and all the *kwareth*, we do not know, and cannot find out. We incline to the view that, as his death became certain, and he and his family held no further hope of recovery, he was smothered. It would have been unseemly to have held a post-mortem, and other information is not available. It might be put in this way; it is possible that he was "assisted" to die.

After his initial election the new *reth* was soon busy thinking about 643 the wake for Fafiti Yor. Shilluk opinion seemed to think it would 766 not be held for a year after his death, and that the tribal installation

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643 766 of the new *reth* would follow still later. It was thought that the time of the early maturing grain was the time to hold it. But the *reth*-elect and responsible advisers seemed to think it should be got over quickly; maybe the general quickening tempo of life had something to do with it. It may, and we think this more likely, be due to a desire to get all the ceremonial over without undue delay. For the *reth* had been elected without a fight, and the Shilluk were so pleased that he had been chosen without violence, or the taint of being a government nominee, that they wanted the period of uncertainty cut down as far as possible

The attendance at the funeral dance was said to be a reflexion on the prestige and the popularity of the late *reth*. This would be an interesting gauge, for the last time, of the esteem in which Fafiti had been held by his people to the end. His prestige had gone through 643 various vicissitudes. He had from the beginning suffered from being a government nominee, and the opposition of the southern Shilluk [668] to his appointment, muted by government action, prevented his obtaining a willing and personal ascendancy over them for many years. As soon as his authority was complete, there followed a period of famine in the early 30's and the attempt by Nyawelo the son of [669] *reth* Kur to assassinate him. This attempt would probably have been successful but for government intervention.

Again in 1936, Fafiti became ill, and the future for the Shilluk was once more clouded. He recovered however, and during his last years his influence throughout the Shilluk country was great, and he was held in high esteem by all his subjects.

766 Near the time of the funeral wake, the Shilluk chiefs and with their men began to collect bulls for driving to Golbainy to be slaughtered for the dance. There was no compulsion on anyone to do this, but [626] public opinion required that those who could, should help according to their means. On the whole the pressure of public opinion was more insistent upon those who lived near than upon those who lived farther away.

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(P.P.H.)

The funeral dance of the late *reth* was held in his private village on 7th, 8th, 9th of November, 46 days after his death. The dance is known as *wowo* in Shilluk, and is different from that held for other members of the tribe, which is called *ywok*.

All arrangements are in the hands of the *kwareth*, and Colo chiefs have no say in the matter at all. At the outset there was considerable argument among the *kwareth* over the form of the dance and the length of time it should last. The new *reth* and the family of Fafiti took one side and some of the *kwareth* chiefs the other. This argument affords an interesting example of how the form of Shilluk tradition becomes blurred from lack of use and the attention which is paid to past precedents. It is worth noting in this context that the dance held in 1913 for *reth* Fadiet lasted for two days only in his private village (*i.e.* the village where he had lived before he succeeded to the throne), and that he had held no dance at all for his predecessor *reth* Kur, no doubt owing to the circumstances attending the end of Kur's reign. This neglect on the part of Fadiet so angered his successor Fafiti, that he hurled the royal drums into the Nile, refusing to beat them for Fadiet, who had not fulfilled his traditional obligations to Kur, and held the dance with Fadiet's own drums. Therefore the dance of Fafiti had to be held with his own drums, for the traditional royal drums no longer exist (Note 5). The *reth* and Fafiti's family maintained that the proper period for a royal funeral dance was four days in the private village of the late *reth*. Other *kwareth* said that it should be two days only in the village of the late *reth* followed by an optional dance in Fashoda lasting four days at the discretion of the *reth*-elect. It should be noted, however, that this claim goes back to events several generations ago, for no dance was held at Fashoda either for Kur or Fadiet and probably not for their predecessors, who died unnatural deaths during the Turkish administration and the Mahdia. The new *reth* declared his intention of holding a dance of four days at Fashoda after the ceremonies at Pareth Fafiti, but at the last minute the counsel of the *kwareth* must have prevailed, for the

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182 766 dance at Pareth Fafiti lasted three days only, and no dance was held at Fashoda at all.

[614] 766 The duties of organizing the dance and of beating the drums fall to a clan called Kwanyikir, the majority of whom live in the vicinity of Kodok. They are responsible for discipline among the dancers, and in particular for keeping unauthorized persons out of the sacred spots. About two hundred and fifty bulls were slaughtered for the occasion, fifty of which were provided by the family of Fafiti and the rest by well-wishers, who included a number of Arab merchants. The distribution of meat was arranged by Kwanyireth Kir, chief of Fadiang, who is chief of all the *kwareth*. As he is senile, blind and deaf, he was assisted by Kwanyireth Bol, chief of Lul and government court chief of the Fashoda division for the portion of Gol Nyikang.

643 776 The new *reth* has no special functions to perform, and it was noticeable how careful he was to keep himself in the background. He never appeared in public while the dances were in progress, and though he attended on all three days he always went straight to his hut on arrival, and remained there during the day, and until he was ready to return [647] to Fashoda. It was obvious that the proceedings concerned the late *reth* alone, and it was his son Byawelo Fafiti who acted as host.

631 766 We had hoped that the form in which the contingents of dancers came in would throw some light on the traditional grouping of Shilluk sections and former political organization. We had been told by the *reth* that all sections in the three divisions of Fashoda, Golbainy, and Detwok would be represented, and no one else. In fact a contingent also came from the Athodwoi division from north of Detwok. As far as could be seen the size of the contingents corresponded with the poll tax lists, and from those contingents who did come, very few warriors could have been missing. In the confusion of the dance it was not easy to see how the sections grouped themselves, but we got the impression that the Golbainy division split up into what, in government terminology are called "sections," but which tribally are more like the other divisions which participated. For example the sections

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of the Detwok division came together, and so did all sections of Fashoda division, but the component sections of the Golbainy division split and formed separate contingents. It is probable that there is no deep tradition behind this, but that grouping is largely governed by what is considered a suitable size for a contingent. Lemmo is a small section and could not produce a contingent of its own, so it joined up with Kodok its larger neighbour. It is not clear whether the sections of Shilluk society have any definite traditional function to perform at the funeral wake of a *reth*. The *reth* had orginally planned that the four days of dancing should be apportioned as follows :--

1. Fashoda 2. Golbainy 3. Detwok 4. Fashoda (again).

This arrangement was carried out on the first day, and the dancing confined to Fashoda division, but Nyigir turned up and were regarded as intruders. Next morning, however, everyone else appeared, and the decision was taken to cut the dance to two days only.

The late *reth's* mother (Note 3) was a Nuba woman from near Fungor, which is on the western boundaries of Shilluk country. Some of her relatives arrived on the second day of the ceremony. Naturally they played no significant part, but it is interesting that they should have come at all.

Layout of the village Pareth Fafiti.

Pareth Fafiti, also called Abwogatho, "fear of death", the village which the late *reth* built for himself, (Note 4) is of medium size and of the usual Shilluk type. There are three cattle byres built round an open space, which is about 70 yards in diameter. The houses are built round the outside of this open space and five of these, in which the wives of the late *reth* reside, had been repaired and the fences round them renewed. The tomb of the late *reth* is the house where his senior wife lived, and in form is no different from any Shilluk homestead except for the eight cross bands on the fence and a stockade of withies outside, which was built after the late *reth's* burial. This

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THE FUNERAL DANCE OF REITH FAFITI.

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1.—Shilluk trumpeters with kudu horns.

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2.—The drums of Fafiti.

There were six of these set vertically in the ground.

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766 homestead, including the stockade, is the form of all tombs of Shilluk *reths*, and also of the numerous shrines of Nyikang which are scattered throughout the country. Outside the tomb a temporary semi-circular screen had been erected, and against this the banners of the divisions were leant and also the spears of the deceased. At the end of the ceremonies the horns of the bulls which were sacrificed were hung upon this screen.

The preliminary day of the funeral dance was confined to Shilluk chiefs. It was said to be a "dance of swords", and only the spears of the late *reth*, about thirty in number and carried by his widows, were brought at all. Those who possessed them carried swords, most of which had been captured from the Dervishes or the Turks, or bought from Arab merchants. The sword is not a Shilluk weapon, and it is probable that they were produced on this occasion to express the anti-Dervish nature of the ceremonies, an attitude of mind which was emphasized by the Shilluk songs of hate against the Dervishes, which on this day and later were sung at frequent intervals. It is difficult to say why the funeral dance of the *reth* has associations with their struggles with the Dervishes, but it may be connected with those Shilluk *reths* who were killed in battle, hanged or died in captivity. The dances are public, and, apart from the funereal aspect of the ceremonies, the defensive unity of the tribe against outside aggression must be made apparent. The tribe is without a *reth*, who is the symbol of their unity, and such occasions call for a dramatization of their co-operation against external enemies. Those who had no swords carried millet stalks, which they plucked from the fences in the village.

At four in the afternoon, the Kwanyikir, after they had set up the drums, (Note 5), walked in procession round them in an anti-clockwise direction, while the dancers began to collect in the centre of the village. After a short interval, a white bull was speared, and the carcase was handed over to the Kwanyikir as a reward for their service. The

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drums began to beat, and the dancers, after dancing round the drums, moved off to salute the tomb of the late *reth*, singing the chant of Nyikang. They then broke up into smaller parties, each led by one or more of the important chiefs present, who brandished their swords in the air in front of them. The sons of the late *reth* did not take part in the dancing, but his wives and female relatives were much in evidence, dancing in front of and around the tomb and round the village, carrying the late *reth's* spears. Each party in turn visited the five huts of the late *reth*, the ordinary dancers singing outside and the chiefs dancing up to the entrances. During this ceremony and on subsequent days, old men and women would often execute *pas seuls*, the women with swords or performing the symbol of mourning by casting dust into the air. Some men imitated lions, and old people danced round the byres where the cattle of the late *reth* had been stabled.

After half an hour of dancing the drums stopped, and everyone sat down, but they began again after a short interval and the crowds took up the chant of *reth* Yor. The songs of the other *reths* were also sung, of Fafiti (two in number), of Yor, Kur Nyidhok and Kwathker, and occasionally the chant of Nyikang. Shortly before sundown, the drums were drawn and carried outside the village. The *reth* left for Fashoda and the dancers dispersed to their homes.

The Public Dance.

Early the next morning, crowds began to collect in the village, and women, mostly *bangreth*, danced round the village singing and moving up to the houses of the late *reth* each in turn. No drum was beaten, the women advancing and retreating with a limping stride – one long pace, one short, with the emphasis and weight on the former. Individual women were also dancing around with sticks or with the swords of their husbands.

The new *reth* arrived at 10.30 a.m. and went straight to his house without appearing in public. Shortly after his arrival the warrior

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THE FUNERAL DANCE OF REITH FAFITL
(*Second day*)

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3.—A Shilluk regiment enters the village of the late *reth*.

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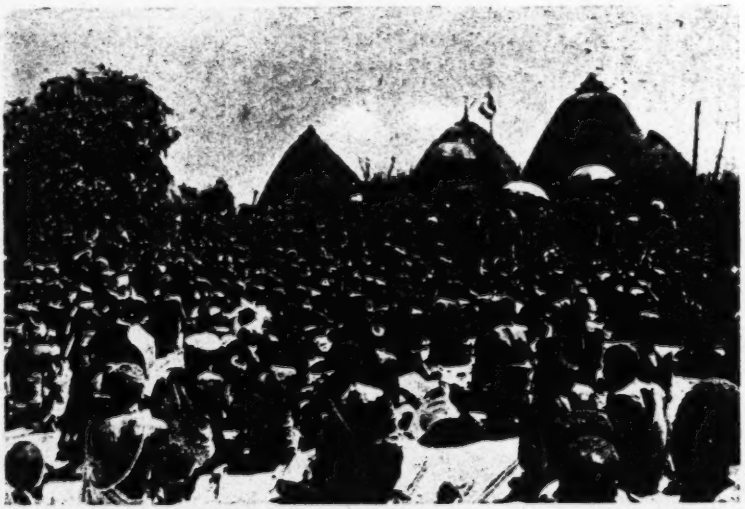

4.—Crowds squat down in front of one of the houses of the late *reth*.

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766 contingents of Fashoda began to come in and marched around the outskirts of the village. The various performances carried out by each group did not vary to any appreciable extent except perhaps in the order. The main events recorded were :-

[411 703] The warriors, (Note 6) with shields, spears and sticks, entered the arena regimented with remarkable discipline into their sections. They first marched round the outside of the village, sometimes kneeling down as a body and beating their shields with their spears. They then moved in procession round the drums, turned to face them and [535] danced with a jumping motion in a circle round them, with their spears raised. They then turned to the tomb of the late *reth* and, mingling with the women who were standing outside and singing the songs of [644] Fafiti, knelt in homage towards him, sometimes beating their shields and clapping hands in time to the drums. The word *wuo*, the traditional form of opening a conversation with the *reth*, was repeated by all at certain points in the song. They then arose and advanced round the village, once more visiting the houses of the late *reth* in turn, some of them peering inside the doors as if seeking for him. They then marched outside the village, and another contingent of warriors entered to take their turn.

766 781 Twice during the day, there was a spontaneous panic, and the crowds fled shrieking from the village. The explanation given was that the spirit of the late *reth* had been brought back by Nyikang and was now in their midst. Hands were clapped to drive the spirit away. The attitude of the Shilluk to this supposed phenomenon is important. There is no doubt that they were seized with fear, and fled as if the devil were behind them, but it was also regarded as a joke, and they all laughed heartily immediately afterwards. This mixture of fear and laughter is also characteristic of their flight from the effigy of Dak, which is described later. The panic was not started by any particular signal except that on both occasions someone heard somebody say "Nyikang has appeared."

The ceremonial dancing performed by the warriors and others, and the panic at the arrival of the departed spirit were repeated without

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obvious variation on the second day, though different contingents took part. On each day, at the close of the ceremonies the drummers whisked the drums from their holes and rushed them out of the village. This was a signal to the dancers to disperse, and they did so with great speed and with mock terror. The spirit of the late *reth* was said to return on the drums being drawn, and hands were clapped by the onlookers as before. On the last day, the holes in which the drums had been set up were immediately filled, and water poured over the spot, and a sheep was brought to the site. This sheep was not immediately sacrificed, but was ceremonially purified and led off to be slaughtered elsewhere.

PART II—ELECTION OF THE RETH

(W.P.G.T.)

The *reth* of the Shilluk is elected from the body of surviving sons of those previous *reths* who have been properly installed in Fashoda. Difficulties arose in recent elections owing to pretenders seeking the throne, who were the sons of men who, although they were proclaimed *reth* by the government or compassed Fashoda of their own accord, had never been installed by Nyikang.

In 1943 these "illegitimate" lines had died out, and all *nyireths* were genuinely eligible for the position of *reth*.

Apart from the law that all *reths* must be the sons of previous *reths*, there is no other rule governing the election. It is more or less understood now, though not in former times, that surviving lines of *nyireths* take it in turn to provide a *reth*, though we think agreement has to be obtained for this. The families of three *reths*, Fafiti, Fadiet and Kur contained among them some thirty or forty *nyireths* all technically eligible for election excluding infant children of Fafiti. In 1943, the two surviving sons of *reth* Yor were not considered owing to old age (one of them had left the Shilluk country some years pre-

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643 viously, but was not known to have died). The sons of Fafiti were not serious competitors as it was generally agreed that it was not their turn; there was no doubt about that. The claim of the sons of Fadiet was not so easily settled. The head of the line was invited, with an elder from the same house, to an unofficial meeting, and he agreed to forego any claim for his line at the election, though the Shilluk say that he was given a more or less firm assurance that next time an election was to take place the house of Fadiet would provide the *reth*. Responsible Shilluk opinion accepted this, although we believe that unofficially certain elements among the southern Shilluk (Fadiet's country) would like to have seen a *reth* chosen from one of Fadiet's sons. Had one of them been chosen, we think it would generally have been held to be irregular. There remained the sons of *reth* Kur, who were considered to be more eligible than the others, as their father had been *reth* before Fafiti or Fadiet, and no *reth* had yet been chosen from his children.

It is often said that a *reth* nominates his successor. Fafiti, in his [77] life time, agreed that that was the old practice before outside influences and governments started to interfere with the Shilluk, and this may well be so, or at least be the tradition, for Fafiti was a mine of Shilluk history. However in the last 100 years or so it has not been done, and Fafiti never intended to nominate his successor. It is clear, however, that a candidate nominated by a dying *reth* is still subject to confirmation or otherwise, by what we may call the "electoral college."

What Fafiti did do was to take under his wing Anei, one of the sons of Kur, and bring him up, as he himself had been brought up by *reth* Kur. Anei was known to be favoured by Fafiti, and he was even given outward signs of recognition by him, such as silver bracelets to designate him as a favourite At Fafiti's death Anei was not nominated, but it was well known that in fact he was Fafiti's choice. Anei later told us that Fafiti used [illegible]ay that if he were lucky he would be chosen *reth*. This designation by a popular *reth* would seem to be an important factor in the choice of the new *reth*.

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The electoral college, in whom rests the responsibility for electing a new *reth*, is a very conscious survival of the traditional structure of the Shilluk tribe, and we believe it to be composed of those who are the descendants of the men who were, at any rate traditionally, the lords-lieutenant of the various counties into which Nyikang divided his kingdom, with the inclusion of three representatives from the large royal clan. 643 666 [174]

Shilluk society is divided into four main classes, the Kwareth, Colo, Ororo, and Bang Reth, two of whom the Kwareth and Colo together represent by far the greater part of the tribe and together provide the electoral college. The Ororo and Bang Reth have very important ceremonial functions in the installing of the *reth*, but no say in his election. As has been explained in the introduction the Kwareth "class" are really an extended clan, they are the descendants of the royal house, and they all trace their ancestry back to a *nyireth* and through him and his father directly back to Nyikang. The Colo are the mass of the Shilluk people divided into many clans, who may trace their origin to a family ancestor who "came with Nyikang" to what is now Shilluk country, or claim to be pre-Shilluk inhabitants of the country, or some of those non-Shilluk accretions, which Nyikang collected to him as he pursued his conquests. 565 666 [614 644]

Nyikang settled the west bank of the White Nile, from "Tonga to Mwomo," (the traditional boundary in the north is Moro some four miles north of the river port at Kaka, and in the south at Fafojo about ten miles upstream of Tonga). As he went he parcelled out the country among his followers, and made eleven of them chiefs[10] of the first degree, answerable to him and looking to him for their appointment and authority. When the organization became complete the lords of the marches of Tonga and Mwomo became even more important than the others by virtue of their duties in connexion with the defence of the Shilluk boundaries and their distance from Fashoda. But although these two were the most important on the executive side of 193 631

10. They were all Colo. Kwareth, who are descended from sons of *reths*, did not, of course, exist in Nyikang's day, for he was the first *reth*.

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173 631 the traditional Shilluk polity, the two nearest to Fashoda were the greatest in the land in all constitutional and ceremonial matters, and in the prestige deriving from their office. These two were the chief of Kwom, the section immediately south of Fashoda, and the chief of Golbainy a section five miles to the north.

Nyikang divided the country into two halves separated by the Khor Arepejur just south of Fashoda. All the country to the south was called Gol Nyikang, and all to the north, Gol Dhiang. The chief of Kwom was in theoretical charge of the counties of Gol Nyikang, and the chief of Golbainy of those of Gol Dhiang. How far the writ of these two viceroys ran in executive matters within their provinces is not clear. Judicially they almost certainly had no say, and in executing commands of the *reth* they may have acted as messengers of the *reth*, but can scarcely have had authority of their own. In all matters concerning the election of the *reth* the deference shown them was a feature of the various meetings.

178 631 Details of these various officers are given in Appendix I. Of the eleven Cclo chiefs, a number are still in fact the chiefs of government "divisions," which correspond in most cases with Nyikang's divisions, but others, whose lineage and following have shrunk, no longer have the support to press their claim to what is still regarded by all Shilluk as their office as of right. Though tradition counts for much and ancestry as well, these sanctions alone will not support the legitimate claim of a chief unless he has an imposing number of warriors prepared to back him. The present chief of Golbainy, for instance, has impeccable ancestry and traditional backing, but his [614] lineage is now small in numbers and his position as chief much weakened on that account and by agitation from other stronger lineages to be granted the chieftainship. Another interesting example of this tendency is that in recent years Kwareth lineages which are generally strong, are pressing to be given the chance to fill these chieftainships from their numbers, against all traditional usage. The traditional great chiefs who are now "impoverished" are always called in on ceremonial occasions, but have been superseded by government of the Shilluk themselves for everyday matters of administration.

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the Shilluk themselves for everyday matters of administration.

Apart from these eleven Colo chiefs, three members of the Kwareth are also members of the electoral college. Each *reth* appoints one of his sons to be "responsible" for the family. This son is not necessarily elected *reth*—in fact we doubt whether he ever has been—but he is of considerable importance. The three members of the electoral college are the descendants of the heads of three great lines of the Kwareth. Why these three should be chosen, to the exclusion of other Kwareth branches is not clear. We think they are the most important because the ancestor of each, from whom his claim to membership of the college depends, was the chief son of those three branches of the family nearest to the throne. The chief of Fadiang is regarded as in some ways chief of the Kwareth, and though the other two Kwareth members are venerable chamberlains, all the houses now eligible to produce candidates for the *reth*ship are descended directly from the sons of *reth* Nyakwac, the chief of whose sons was the ancestor of the chief of Fadiang.

Such, as far as we can disentangle it, is the theory of the constitution of the electoral body. In practice there were certain difficulties due, as usual to the fact that Shilluk tradition is nowhere written down and relies upon the memories of the elder men. A comparison of the government files on the elections of 1903 and 1917 shows that the lists of chiefs forming the electoral college were more or less the same as those in 1943 and the variations were mostly accounted for by deaths, absentees etc.

The first thing that happened after the passing of *reth* Fafiti was an unofficial committee on "ways and means", whose main object seemed to be to discover what ought to be done, and who ought to do it. This process went on, more or less consciously till the end of the installation ceremonies. It was a refreshing of the memories of Shilluk tradition and history. At this meeting the members of the electoral college were decided upon and summoned to Fashoda. Certain influential chiefs seemed to think it would be impossible to

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643 elect a *reth* without help from government, but in the event no difficulties arose.

643 Within a week of the passing of the *reth* the members of the
666 electoral college had met at Fashoda, and many other influential chiefs and notables had gathered there as well. An unanimous choice of Anei son of Kur, the favourite of Fafiti, was made, and there seemed to be little discussion and no opposition from outside the electoral college.[11]

631 Several interesting points in connexion with the actual election
643 procedure were noticeable. The electors divided into three groups,
666 Gol Nyikang (southern Shilluk) under the chief of Kwom, Gol Dhiang (northern Shilluk) under the chief of Golbainy, and the Kwareth under the chief of Fadhiang. Agreement was first reached between the chief of Kwom and the chief of Golbainy upon Anei as *reth*, and when this agreement was announced to the other electors they seem to have agreed to it without much further discussion. This is an interesting
[156] fact, and one which is not in accord with normal Shilluk practice, where a man with decided opinions upon anything is seldom overawed by time or place in expressing them. The Colo chiefs seem to have lined up behind their respective leaders, the chiefs of Gol Nyikang and Gol Dhiang, and as the choice lay in the first place with Colo, the chief of Fadhiang, on behalf of the Kwareth, had nothing to add.

It was explained to us that the whole thing hinged upon agreement of the chief of Gol Nyikang and the chief of Gol Dhiang. Had they disagreed, their respective chiefs would have ranged themselves in opposing camps. What the Kwareth would have done is difficult to say. They said they would have followed the chief of Gol Dhiang, maybe because Fadhiang is part of Gol Dhiang but many, if not most Kwareth live in Gol Nyikang. On several past occasions when a
631 *reth* has been elected there has been disagreement between Gol
643 Nyikang and Gol Dhiang, presumably because the two chiefs failed
666 to reach agreement. It was the disagreement between these two
669 which produced civil war between the two halves of the country, or

11. The "canvassing" of one of the sons of *reth* Fadhiet never amounted to opposition.

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government intervention in the past. As several of the electors said, "if there had not been agreement between the chiefs of Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang, we should have gone home, each behind our leader" —presumably to prepare for war.

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At the meetings of the electoral college etiquette was very strict, and as far as we could make out, the order, in theory, was that the chief of Gol Nyikang proposes a candidate to the chief of Gol Dhiang; no doubt this is in fact discussed privately by the two chiefs. The chief of Gol Dhiang replies agreeing to the proposal (or not, as the case may be). In fact there is not much more for the other members to say, though they doubtless know before hand, and may even have some say in who is to be the candidate proposed by their chief. Should any chief or notable, outside the electoral college, be sitting at their meeting, as did in fact happen, he would be very careful not to do more than listen. He would feel it quite out of place to express an opinion, however important his position might be. We think that on the surface at least considerable honour was paid to the observance of this etiquette. It would, however, have been odd if there had not been a great deal of "lobbying."

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During the interval between the death of a *reth* and the election of his successor and his initial establishment in Fashoda there is an awkward period in which the Shilluk feel a sense of potential danger. Custom requires that all *nyiruths*, potential claimants to the throne, should remain at home. Should anyone among them wish to defy custom and try to obtain a following to instal himself in Fashoda, this is his chance. After the electoral college has agreed upon a new *reth* the chances of a pretender become much less, though the period of danger is never quite over till after the installation of the chosen *reth* by Nyikang in Fashoda. The danger from ambush, illness, or disaster attributed to the *reth* always exists.

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The procedure for seizing the throne of Fashoda by force is as follows. A *nyiruth* who is living in a section of the Shilluk, and who fancies his chances of becoming *reth*, persuades, or is persuaded by the chief of his settlement or section to start an insurrection; without the co-operation of the *nyiruth* and his chief an insurrection is impos-

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
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643 sible, for only the settlement chief can call up the necessary force of
669 warriors. Equally an insurrection must centre round a *nyireth*, for
[627] only *nyireths* are eligible to become *reths*. (It is for this reason that Shilluk custom enjoins upon all *nyireths* to remain quietly at home, as a safeguard, during an interregnum.) The procedure then varies with the fortunes of war. It seems probable that one settlement—there are some 100 settlements in the Shilluk country—would not of itself be able to start openly a campaign of violence. Should the electoral college fail to agree upon a single choice, then there would be a good chance of a pretender rallying half the kingdom to his cause, as Cuti Ajang succeeded in doing in 1917.

643 When the electoral college has settled upon a choice, the initial formalities take place very quietly, as if to avoid attracting attention. The new *reth* (who will not be *reth* in full sense till Nyikang has installed him) is brought by the chief of Gol Nyikang, traditionally after a mock duel, though we doubt whether this is obligatory. He is brought stealthily and by night, and at early dawn a bull is speared at Fashoda, and he is taken into the house favoured by his father in his life time in Fashoda, where he has to step over a sheep, held prostrate at the entrance to the house, and has a string of beads tied on to his ankle. The spearing of the bull and the tying on of the beads both symbolize his new status of what we may call *reth*-elect. We think the spearing of the bull is the more significant.

It is interesting that on this first day Anei was obviously under the stress of great emotion, natural in one who overnight, finds himself translated into the incarnation of the tribal hero, who is so closely descended from God.

631 Immediately on being introduced to Fashoda the *reth*-elect starts
643 to receive the homage, unofficially and without ceremony, of the chiefs of his kingdom. They come from all parts of the country, and for a chief to fail to come would be a sign of disaffection, or at best gross discourtesy. The *reth*'s brothers too all come, or should come, to
643 pay homage, and other *nyireths* as well. His brothers appear to bear
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him no malice, though his election has practically taken away their chances of becoming *reth* in future. All the same there remains potential danger to the new *reth*-elect from an angry or ambitious *nyireth* trying to ambush him by night. No armed rising is now likely, but an individual challenge remains a possibility for the *reth* till the end of his days. 643 644 [669]

The initial ceremonies are simple, and soon over. There remains an interval for the *reth*-elect, until he is installed by Nyikang. The funeral obsequies of his predecessor are largely arranged by others, though he has a say in fixing dates and procedure. 643 [766]

A final word may be said upon the part played by the intervention of government in this and previous elections. As explained above elections have taken place in 1903 and 1917 in the time of the present government, and before that there was a period of uncertainty, sometimes amounting to civil war during the Mahdia and "Turkia". There is what might be called a "traditional" tendency towards civil war at the time of the election of a *reth*, which is the customary way out of an impasse caused by the disagreement of the two "kingmakers". Since the advent of the present government steps have been taken to get the *reth* elected by peaceful means, in spite of the disagreement. 175 643 648

In 1903 the governor at Kodok himself presided at the election, and more or less dictated the choice of Fadiet as *reth* in place of Kur. Kur had appeared somewhat too oriental in his methods, and it was thought that Fadiet would be more amenable as a government nominee. This proved to be the case, but the fact that he was nominated by government made him of little political importance in the tribe.

In 1917 a disagreement between the king-makers threatened civil war, and the governor had to instal Fafiti and protect him by a detachment of troops. This again detracted from his importance as tribal head.

In 1943 the kingmakers reached agreement, and government

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
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had nothing to do except to warn the Shilluk that a *reth* chosen by violence would not be accepted by government.

During the interval between the death of a *reth* and the final installation of a successor the Shilluk lack, in a certain degree, their chief mediator with Nyikang and God, and the *reth*-elect lacks certain attributes of divinity, which are bestowed upon him later by Nyikang. Both parties express this inadequacy by certain prohibitions on their behaviour, many of which, in the case of the *reth* at any rate, are not signs of mourning but signs of respect to Nyikang, as they endure till his installation, and do not in all cases cease with the wake of the deceased. It is forbidden for Shilluk to light grass fires (except perhaps along the drying marshes, by the river banks) between the death of one *reth* and the installation of his successor. Any offender is liable to a fine. There are two types of building among the Shilluk; walls are built from mud alone laid in circular layers, or else a framework of millet stalks is first erected and then packed with mud outside and in. The latter technique is regarded as inferior; the former is the royal or divine style of building. Fashoda is built like that, and all the shrines to Nyikang, *reths* and *nyireths* throughout the country. Men of substance also build their houses after this fashion, and it seems as if this may have been the original traditional form of Shilluk building, and the other form is looked upon as something foreign. This royal style of building is forbidden in the same way as the burning of grass. It is said that the prohibition upon this royal style of building is a sign of respect to Nyikang; "you must not build in Nyikang's style, while Nyikang's houses are down". Nyikang's houses are not actually thrown down, except the great shrine of Fanyikang, but each shrine of Nyikang is rebuilt by each new *reth*, or should be; and there is a general feeling that there is a rebirth of the whole Nyikang tradition at the installation of a *reth*. During the period of the interregnum there is a general feeling that something has passed away from the Shilluk, and requires renewing by Nyikang's reappearance, and until Nyikang himself has come to renew his contact with the Shilluk the people mark the interval by abstaining from building in the way they associate with Nyikang. Building of the inferior style

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does not count. It has been suggested that the prohibition of grass fires may spring from this prohibition upon building: it is necessary, if the building season is to start late, to preserve the grass for roofing. Out of respect for Nyikang it is also forbidden for the Shilluk to indulge in inter-sectional fighting, or possibly from fear of his wrath.

Several other prohibitions govern the *reth's* own behaviour: he may not sit upon the ambatch mattress, favoured by the Shilluk, until his installation, and his movements are considerably restricted. There is great importance attached to watercourses by the Shilluk, and until his installation the *reth* found himself unable to cross west of the big *khor* beside Fanyikang, which joins the Nile just downstream of the shrine of Nyikang.

To the north of Fashoda, he was "afraid of going too close to Nyikang". In fact he found any suggestion that he should travel north of Mal near Detwok uncomfortable. The importance attaching to *khors* is not confined to the two at Fanyikang and Mal. Whenever the new *reth* comes to a *khor*, before crossing it, he must step over a sheep, held prostrate in the bed, before he can cross. This sheep must be brought from the nearest village, but if a death has recently occurred in the village, or no one can be found to lend a sheep a sheaf of grass will do instead.

PART III—THE INSTALLATION OF ANEI KUR

There are various preliminaries to the installation of the *reth* by Nyikang. Many materials necessary for the ceremonies have to be collected, and apparatus has to be made.

The most important is the expedition to *pathe manyo* (or raiding country), and northwards to the country traditionally conquered, though more probably merely raided, by Dak, the son of Nyikang. Two small sections are responsible for this embassy. The subsection of Akwobai in Kwom (Gol Nyikang), and the small section of Abwor in Mwomo (Gol Dhiang), are responsible for obtaining silver and cloth from the north, and as they go north they solicit gifts from Shilluk villages by the way.

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693 villages by the way. One of the most noticeable features of the activities surrounding Nyikang is the principle that he and his lieutenants are given, or take, what they want from Shilluk as they pass. This [173] embassy to the north may well have its origin in a raiding party, and the two sections, whose duty it is to perform this journey, may have been obliged to render this form of military service to Nyikang. Nowadays the silver and the cloth which were originally plunder, are [177] bought from Kosti with money supplied by the *reth*, and contributed [137] by Shilluk north of Kaka. Other requirements are ostrich feathers procured from the country round Kaka for the head pieces of the images of Nyikang and Duk, by the people of Mwomo, and ivory for bracelets to be worn by various functionaries at the installation itself. This was provided from the tusks of elephants slain by the Shilluk in 1938.[1] They are very rare in Shilluk country. Bamboo is brought from Fungor in the eastern Nuba Mountains for the bodies of Nyikang's image, and those of his sons Duk and Cal. This is brought by the [183] people of Akwobai. Certain sacred ropes made from the fibre of dom palms, which grow round Fanyikang, are brought by "Duk", who with his followers makes a special pilgrimage some two months before the ceremonies.

693 An obligation lies on the chiefs of Fanyikang to produce skins 334 of the female Mrs. Gray antelope from Fanyikang Island. These are 252 required as the high robes of honour of the *reth*. They are worn by the *reth* himself and all the important people in the ceremony. To be presented with a Mrs. Gray skin is a mark of the greatest esteem. They are royal game, and are only killed in the first year of a new *reth's* reign. On this occasion doubtless to save any complications with the government, which strictly preserves these antelopes, the operation was all over before the administration had word of it.

643 The houses of Fashoda had to be tidied up and new fences built, 356 but no new building in mud was done.

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[137] [1] cf. In 1938 a few elephants invaded Shilluk country near Malakal, for the first time for many years.

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There were various dignitaries created *fagos* or chiefs responsible for separate small ceremonies. These had all to be appointed. They were old female *nyireths*, specially appointed, who looked after certain shrines of Nyikang. 643

An interesting ceremony was the lighting of the fire for the special blacksmiths, Kwanyikang from Golbainy, to make the sacred spears. It took place in the middle of January. A rough grass shelter was built on the clear ground east of Fashoda, and a white bull with brown markings was brought up for slaughter, and a black cow calf from the sacred herd of Nyikang. This was not for slaughtering, but was given to the Kwanyikang to take home. It and its offspring will remain the kine of Nyikang. A brown sheep is also brought. 643 782 [372] 326

Some little way off from the shelter the blacksmiths' implements, bellows, anvils, hammers etc., were brought out and laid upon a bull skin. When all was ready the implements were moved with great care to beside the shelter where they were laid out on the bull skin once more. Then the cow calf was completely draped in cloth, great care being taken to see that it was blind-folded. The bull calf and sheep were all tethered close to the shelter, and the spectators, including the *reth*, who took no part, stood round in a semicircle.

Two spears, sacred to Nyikang were brought down from the mound Aturwic, and a part of the sheep's right ear was cut off with one of the spears. This ear was said to assist the making of the fire. It was placed with some tinder upon a hearth beside the shelter, and the butt of a fish spear twirled and fire made. The sparks were nursed and taken into the shelter, where they were fanned into a fire. Then a piece was cut from the right ear of the bull, and put into a small gourd. A little bull's blood was also drained into the gourd. A blacksmith seized a hammer and hit the bull a blow on the base of the skull. The bull fell at once. Two more blows were delivered, and as it was about to die an incision was made in its throat with a spear, and the blood drawn off in gourds. The small gourd was said to be a libation to Nyikang, the large gourds full of blood were said [778] [372]

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The March of Nyikang and Dak to Nyior.

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1.—Dak leads, borne by his bearers. Nyikang follows. Behind is the forked branch known as "Nyikang's bed" and the basket which holds his food.

[312]

2.—Nyikang and Dak leave the village of *Ketā Fadīl*.

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to be for the Kwanyikang to drink. The preliminaries were then complete for the forging of the spears to be used in the installation. They numbered about fifty.

The Shilluk say that Nyikang disappeared in a whirlwind, and since then Akurwa has been a place of especial sanctity. Nyikang is liable to re-appear at any time, in a variety of different forms and at any place in Shilluk country, but since Akurwa was the scene of his departure, it is also the most likely place for his return. There are many shrines of Nyikang in Shilluk country, but Akurwa is by far the most important and it is there that the effigies of Nyikang and Dak are kept. These effigies are not merely symbols. They may "become active" at any time, and when active they are Nyikang and Dak. The effigy of Nyikang is rarely taken on a journey in normal times, though it is often brought out to dance during religious festivals at Akurwa itself. The effigy of Dak makes periodical excursions through the country. Both effigies have an important part to play in the ceremonies of installation. The soul of Nyikang is manifest in the effigy for the occasion, and he must march from Akurwa to Fashoda to test the qualities of his new successor and to install him at the capital. This march, the opposition shown by the *reth* and the final ritual performed at Fashoda are the essence of the installation ceremonies. The symbolic substitution on the sacred stools[13] of the *reth*-elect for the effigy is the principal method by which the soul of Nyikang is transferred.

The Progress of Nyikang from Akurwa to Nyieir.

As the time of the installation drew near, it was plain that there had been some delay. Nyikang was expected to arrive at Fashoda by the new moon of February 24th 1944. But as the old moon waned there were nothing but rumours that he had started and others that he had not. This was worrying to those around the *reth*, for tradition has it that if Nyikang disapproves of the *reth* he may become too heavy

13. Described in Part III, pp. 61 ff.

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* DAK *

NYIKANG

THE EFFIGIES.

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to lift. However the delay was quite simply explained. Nyikang was not ready. A hitch had occurred in finding the cloth for his body. (A new effigy of Nyikang is made for each *reth*, and on the death of a *reth* the old effigy is destroyed). Another delay was caused by the Ororo messengers sent from Fashoda to Akurwa to say that all was ready. They dawdled on the way.

On the 26th February "Nyikang" and "Dak" started on their way. First they must beat the bounds of Shilluk country proper, and they went to Moro, some five miles north of Kaka market. The procession was first observed in the section of "Thorr" just south of Kaka.

Nyikang and Dak are carried by men of the Kwanyikwom clan who live at Akurwa. They are surrounded by the youths of the Kwanyikwom carrying whips to drive away the inquisitive or profane. As Nyikang passes through a section of the Shilluk country, the men of the section escort him to their borders. Anyone who is beaten by the whips of the Kwanyikwom is said to be held to ransom until he pays a fine of a goat. There are various offences for which Nyikang penalizes people on the way. Nyikang's image is made from ostrich feathers and bamboo. It is therefore sacrilege for a Shilluk to be seen with an ostrich feather in his hair or carrying bamboo. The ritual of burial must be completed for all who have recently died. Nyikang must not pass anything unclean. In Nyikang's presence Shilluk must not present a warlike appearance. A man carrying a spear may not have a shield as well, and a man with a shield is only allowed a millet stalk. Nyikang advances with his son Dak at a loping trot of about 6 m.p.h. escorted by the Kwanyikwom and the men of the section through which he is passing. As he approaches a village the people dash out as if to ward him off, but quickly over-powered they soon join the procession. It is usual for gifts of a sheep or a goat to be presented to or exacted by Nyikang, and it was noticeable how all small stock and fowls were either shut up or driven away from the vicinity of Nyikang, for Nyikang has a right to anything he fancies. As Nyikang proceeds with Dak his son beside him, the escort chants

As Nyikang proceeds with Dak he sow beside him, the escort chants

643 778 [533] the songs of Nyikang and Dak recounting their exploits of conquest. From time to time Nyikang turns round and dances back as if to threaten those following. When he does this, Dak rushes ahead, carried in a charging position, his body held horizontally pointed like a spear, and Nyikang himself is carried 'at the slope'. The place where Nyikang spends the night is unpredictable. He does not move much after sunset, and normally spends the night in a shrine.

[417] Nyikang was observed at rest at Moro, the northern limit of his progress, obviously propped up upon his "bed", a long forked stick with a leather flap hanging from the fork. He was inside the fence of the large shrine, and outside under three large *heglig* trees, sacred to Nyikang, the people of Moro and the Kwanyikwom were dancing in his honour.

[536] The dancing at Moro was of a usual type. The dancers dancing in an anti-clockwise direction around the drums of Nyikang. The [533] burden of most of the songs was the conquest of the "Funy" and their ejection from Shilluk country. It was thought that Nyikang would stay two nights at Moro, but he was late and in a hurry. He left that same afternoon and returned to Akurwa on the 28th. On the 29th he started for Fashoda.

Nyikang was next observed at Golbainy south of Kodok on the 6th March. (He is said to have stayed in the following places—1.3.44 Nun, 2.3.44 Adod Thuro, 3.3.44 Athodwoi, 4.3.44 Detwok (Pabiu), 5.3.44 Kodok (Ninmal).) When Nyikang spends the night at a village, [574] the houses must be vacated by the villagers for the Kwanyikwom, who have also a right to be fed.

On the 6th March Nyikang arrived before midday at the village of *reth* Fafiti in Golbainy, where he spent the heat of the day. We arrived shortly after Nyikang and observed that he had been put into one of *reth* Fafiti's houses (not the tomb). There were dances around 533 the big *heglig* tree in the village similar to the dances at Moro. A large 535 contingent of female *bangreth* were the most obvious element led by 643 the senior *bareth*. The little drums of Nyikang were beaten under

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the tree, and the boys and young men danced round with millet stalks, while the women clustered in the middle round the drums. The usual songs of Nyikang and of the various *reths* were sung, and we observed the *pas seuls* by *bangreth* with or without swords, often in little groups of five or six old women. There was no dancing inside the fence surrounding the tomb, and the crowd was noticeably small, consisting only of Kwanyikwom and a few surrounding villagers. At 3.30 p.m. there was no activity in the village, and we thought Nyikang must have gone. However, when an old woman who was sitting in the shade of a house was asked, she said "of course he is still here; are you fool enough to suppose our king would travel in this heat?" Shortly before 4.00 p.m. the Kwanyikwom began to collect, and a contingent of Ororo from Yoiny were drawn up near by. At 4.00 p.m. a bugler stood up from where he had been sitting in the shade of a byre and blew a call. Some moments later two drummers, each carrying one of the drums of Nyikang, appeared from the house where Nyikang was and beat a tattoo. Then another call on the bugle and the Kwanyikwom, kneeling down, started singing the songs of Nyikang. Later they got up and, joined by the Ororo and the children of the village, danced a solemn measure before the house where Nyikang was staying. Grown men of the Kwanyikwom danced out in front before the door with swords or millet stalks, and we noticed one man with an Ingessana throwing-knife. Soon men brought out from inside the fence some bundles of tightly packed grass, and some ropes made of *dom* fibre. They hung the ropes upon the fence and laid the grass bundles against it on the side of the opening opposite to where the drummers were standing. Shortly afterwards two men carrying baskets of food upon their heads appeared, and two others wound the ropes over their shoulders and round their waists. By this time there was considerable movement inside the fence. The two spears of Nyikang were raised up, and the forked stick upon which Nyikang sleeps. Then Dak appeared and behind him Nyikang himself. The two images posed for a moment or two while the company danced before them. Dak led off the procession at the usual jog trot, and they proceeded round the village to the beat of the drums, stopping at each

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535 643 778 of *reth* Fafiti's houses, searching for him in the way the dancers had done at the funeral dance. They stopped before each house while the dancers danced up to them. They spent rather longer in front of the tomb of Fafiti, and then suddenly moved off on their way with all their following.

643 778 They passed the village of the new *reth*, paying no attention to it, and went direct to the village of the chief of Golbainy (and all Gol Dhiang). Some 150 yards north of the village the images stopped, [533] and the company prayed to them and sang. They approached the village from the side away from the road, but, instead of dancing [535] straight in, they stopped on the threshold, and the people of the village, led by the chief, danced up to them as if to ward them off, and then quickly retired. The chief was called up, and then went off to his house. He brought a small grass mat (one foot square used for covering pots as a protection from flies), a small piece of rope,[14] and put [415 285] them on the ground. Dak and Nyikang stepped over the mat and rope and entered the village. A short dance round the village followed of the usual pattern, with Nyikang and Dak taking part. After a little Nyikang and Dak took up a position before the house which had been prepared for them in case they should wish to spend the night. The congregation sat down before them and sang songs. The women sat with heads averted from Nyikang. The refrain of the most popular [533 539] song was :—

"Let the Dervish wreak his will,
Nyikang's land will prosper still."

643 The chief was called once more and had a secret talk with Dak. It is the tradition that Nyikang presents the chief of Golbainy on every installation with a spear, because originally Nyikang invested his [755] forebear with a spear of office. The alleged original spear is still used to cure disease. A piece of goat's ear is cut off with the spear and tied on the patient's ankle. The chief first provided a cattle

14. This may have been a pledge for the gift of sheep or a bull, or instead of a sheep for Nyikang to step over on entering the village.

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rope, a pledge of a bull for Nyikang and his people, and then produced an old blackened spear from his house, of unusual type among the Shilluk. After a show of reluctance he accepted a new spear. He later explained that the show of reluctance was due to the fact that the new spear was not an exact replica of the original. We were shown several spears which had been presented at previous installations, and then one was brought out which was the "original." But an old woman sitting by said "Nonsense, that is the one Nyikang presented when *reth* Yor was installed."

After the spear had been presented, the procession moved off to Nyigir. As before, on leaving Golbainy the people of Golbainy left the procession and their places were taken by the people of Nyigir, who grew in number as Nyikang reached the village of Adodo in Nyigir, where he was to stay till the installation

Nyikang, led by Dak, approached Adodo from the back and drew up outside the village while their following sang songs. Then a sheep was brought and tied in the middle of the village by the legs. Nyikang and Dak stepped over it, and Nyikang danced over to the house prepared for him and went in. Dak stayed outside for some time, dancing around, faster and faster, charging people who got in his way, until finally he too disappeared into the house.

The Reth's flight to Debalo

(P.P.H.)

The march of Nyikang *from Akurwa to Nyigir was ended. He* and Dak surrounded by the Kwanyikwom and other followers were safely installed in the village of Adodo. They would take their rest there for three days.

Meanwhile the *reth* had anxiously awaited their arrival but had not moved from the confines of Fashoda. In the early hours of the morning after Nyikang had reached Adodo, the *reth* secretly moved to Debalo which is a few miles south of the capital. He was accompanied

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643 by a number of his wives carrying his personal luggage and his food, [644] and with him also were some of his personal bodyguard. During his three days seclusion at Debalo, the *reth* is said to be in especial danger of attack by his rivals, and extra precautions are taken for his safety.

[312] We were told—but did not see at close quarters—that fires are ceremonially lit and that fire-sticks were used for this purpose. There are three possible explanations of this; that the fire is lit as a ritual act and as part of the initiation of the *reth*; the Shilluk expression *pic mac* suggests some form of symbolic purification or initiation, for it is an expression used in that context by other Nilotics; that fires were lit round the confines of the village as an added precaution against marauders; or merely numerous fires lit to cook the meat of sacrifice. [114] Both the latter explanations are suggested by Munro in his account of the installation of *reth* Fafiti in 1917.

Whether the lighting of fires was a precautionary measure of security, a ritual act, or merely for purposes of feasting, the measures taken to safeguard the *reth* were manifest in other ways. A special homestead had been built for his reception in fine style with the eight cross-ties which are a symbol of royalty. It was situated in a particularly ostentatious position in the village of Debalo. But the *reth* did not occupy it. Instead, in order to deceive his enemies, he took up residence in a very ramshackle hut, which had no embellishments whatever.

613 776 The *reth's* stay at Debalo is not truly a period of seclusion. He has removed himself from all possible contact with Nyikang or his followers from the northern division of Gol Dhiang, but holds court among his own supporters, who flock in to pay homage from the division of Gol Nyikang. As yet we have formed no definite conclusions as to why the *reth* moves so hurriedly to Debalo as soon as Nyikang reaches Nyigir. Shilluk say that the *reth* has "fled" from Nyikang, and that he sends messengers to Nyikang beseeching him to stay away. It may be that this is considered a suitable sign of humility in accepting the office of *reth* of the Shilluk. Nyikang's attitude of arrogant

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resentment at the new *reth's* presumption in occupying Fashoda at all becomes apparent later in the ceremonies. It is possible that Nyikang is believed to resent the unwarranted seizure of his powers by a person who may be unworthy of the trust. This complex attitude is one of the main problems of the installation, for it is undoubtedly an attitude which conditions the behaviour of the *reth* later in the ceremonies, and is the object of the two battles fought out by the opposing armies. 643 776

Meanwhile further preparations for the final ceremonies were being made. The small grass huts called *adul*, which form the temporary camp outside the shrine of Nyikang at Fashoda, were built by the chief of Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang. This camp is used at a later period in the installation ceremonies, but it had to be built previously by these chiefs who are traditionally responsible for its erection. It is not built by orders of the chiefs to their own followers, though the latter bring in the materials, but with their own hands. 643

On the evening of the last day at Fashoda a procession arrived from Lul and passed through Debalo. This was the party responsible for bringing the spear of Nyikang and with it the sacred beads, which are said to have been part of the bride-wealth of Adwai, daughter of Nyikang, who married a man from the Nuba Mountains. The beads came from the shrine of Nyikang at Ocoro in Lul, and were guarded by the oldest and largest of Nyikang's spears, which was, like all really sacred objects among the Shilluk, wrapped in white cloth. They were carried on the head of a *nyireth* (a daughter of a *reth*) specially appointed for the purpose. They are said to be red and green, cylindrical and about half an inch long, but we were not alowed to see them. According to tradition, the *nyireth* and one of the *bang reth* hold a vigil by night over the beads in one of the huts called Araic on the sacred mound Aturwic. If one of the beads presents itself with a hole through it, the phenomenon is considered a good omen, and next morning it is threaded and tied to the *reth's* ankle. If no hole is found the omen is bad, but the bead is tied to the *reth's* ankle all the same. This ritual takes place the night after the installation of the new *reth* on the sacred stool of the Shilluk, but it takes place in strict secrecy. 643 778 [644] [787]

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643 We did not witness the selection of the bead. During the *reth*'s stay
[778] at Debalo the period of amnesty for adulterers and seducers, which is mentioned by Munro, comes into effect. Adulterers and seducers of unmarried girls are able to avoid the full legal consequences of their
[684 sins by paying a small fine in goats and sheep to the *reth*. A few
696] Shilluk took advantage of this, and some thirty sheep and goats were brought in.

During the period of semi-seclusion, apart from the preparation, both parties remained comparatively inactive. After three days all was ready for the final and public phases of the installation ceremonies.

The Installation Ceremonies.

631 The conventional opposition between the northern and southern
643 divisions, of the country Gol Dhiang and Gol Nyikang, now becomes clearer. The boundary between them is the watercourse called
616 Arepɔjur, which means "the gathering of the peoples", and which lies about half a mile to the south of Fashoda. Headed by the chief of Gol Nyikang, chiefs, warriors and headmen had been flocking in to Debalo to join forces with the *reth*-elect, and it is their traditional duty to guard him and to support him in his struggles with Nyikang. Nyikang has taken up residence at Adodo a few miles north of Fashoda, and the people who live north of the boundary muster to his aid. The three days semi-seclusion of the *reth* at Debalo and Nyikang at Adodo is thus primarily a period of preparation for the mock battle to come. The march of the *reth* from Debalo and Nyikang from Adodo and their meeting on the high ground above Arepɔjur symbolises the ceremonial division of the country into two moieties. The balance between them is strongly emphasized at all points. Nyikang must have his shield borne by a special bearer; so must the *reth*. Certain ritual objects, spears, beads, and the like must accompany the *reth*; others must be carried with Nyikang. Moreover, the joining in battle of the two parties, the capture of the *reth*, and the subsequent rites and ceremonies is an occasion in which all classes and sections of the Shilluk participate, and the formal election and installation of the new

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reth is ceremonially impressed upon the minds of all his people. It is the occasion when the *reth* is formally recognized by the Shilluk as a whole. The public nature of the ceremony must be emphasized because prior to it, only limited sections of society—Kwareth, Ororo and the Colo chiefs—have been concerned. 616 631 643

The ceremonies which are enacted on this day are divided into four distinct phases with a variety of ritual observance in each :- 643

1. The simultaneous march of the opposing armies to the high ground immediately south-west of Fashoda, and the mock battle which follows.
2. The capture of the *reth* by Nyikang, and the procession to the shrine of Nyikang in Fashoda.
3. The enthronement of the effigy of Nyikang on the sacred stool, the substitution of the *reth* for Nyikang on the stool, and the possession of the *reth* by the spirit of Nyikang.
4. The retirement of the *reth* into the temporary camp, which is specially built for the occasion on the open ground immediately facing the shrine.
5. The ritual lighting of new fire by the Ororo and Kwareth just before sundown.

The first two phases are public and concern the tribe as a whole. The third phase, which retains a degree of mystery, is witnessed by limited sections of the population from outside and is screened even from them by a canopy. The *reth*'s retirement into the temporary camp concerns him and certain traditional functionaries alone, and the rites which follow are carried out in strict secrecy. The fire-making ceremony concerns chiefly the inhabitants of Fashoda and the *reth*'s immediate followers.

The main events of each phase are described from the records of all the observers who attended. We have deliberately avoided an over-detailed description of the events and behaviour of the participants,

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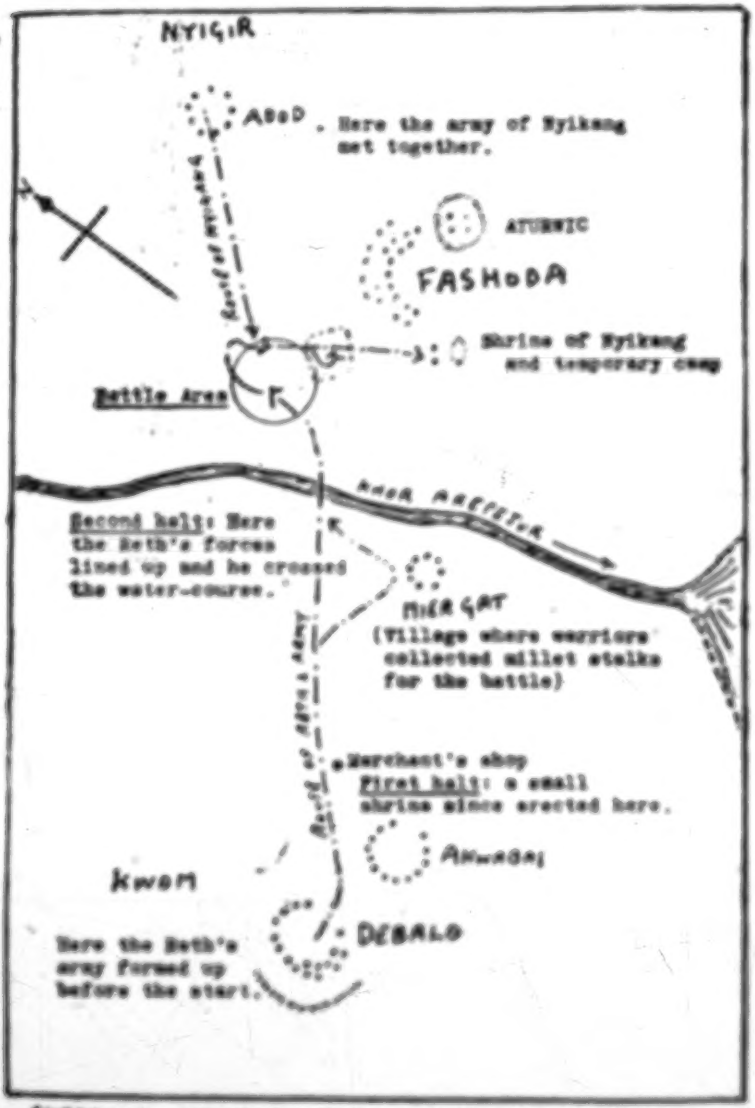
NYIGIR
ABOD
Here the army of Nyikang met together.
ATURWIC
FASHODA
Shrine of Nyikang and temporary camp
Battle Area
Second halt: Here the Reth's forces lined up and he crossed the water-course.
MIER GAT
(Village where warriors collected millet stalks for the battle)
Merchant's shop
First halt: a small shrine since erected here.
ANWAGAI
KWOM
DEBALO
Here the Reth's army formed up before the start.

SKETCH-MAP SHOWING AREA OF INSTALLATION CEREMONIES.

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643 for the really significant rites would thus be lost. More detailed descriptions and explanations are recorded in the Notes with numbered references in the text.

The Reth's March From Debalo to Akepejur.

On the morning of March 11th, the *reth* was still at Debalo, and his warriors, together with some of the chiefs of the south who had come in to pay homage to him the day before, began to assemble in the village. By 8 a.m. there were large clusters of them seated in the shade around the houses ready to move off when the *reth* was ready. At this point of the proceedings we were told that the Kwa Okelo, who should have been at Debalo by then, were not ready, and that they were known to be mustering at their village which is only a mile from Debalo. There were obvious signs of preparation within the *reth's* hut, but we saw nothing of significance except the sheep and goats which had been taken that morning from the self-confessed adulterers and seducers of girls. The sheep and goats were brought to the *reth's* house in charge of four men but they were driven back to the cattle byre from which they had been brought after a few minutes. Meanwhile a message had been sent out to the Kwa Okelo to tell them to hurry and to bring with them the small girl (*nya kwer*), (Note 7) who plays so important a part in the ceremonies.

About an hour and half later the Kwa Okelo could be seen in the distance to the south of Debalo. Behind them and mustering in another village were the Kwa Ojul. Both parties began to move off in the direction of Debalo. On their arrival they drew up in close formation outside the village and near to the *reth's* hut. They were 533 carrying spears but no shields and were singing songs. The gist of these songs was that Nyikang had returned with the wind. In the midst of the Kwa Okelo a small cluster of women could be seen and among them *nya kwer*, and in front of them was a single man who carried aloft a small basket covered with a grass mat, doubtless *nya kwer's* "luggage." The Kwa Okelo marched into Debalo, but the Kwa Ojul remained outside and did not join the procession until the

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The First Day of the Installation.

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1.—Dimbalo. Just before the march to Fashoda.
The *reth* dressed in white with a dark sash is standing outside his quarters awaiting the gathering of his warriors.

643

2.—Akwoyun. Casting the black bull over which the reth must step before the crowning.

[FACING P. 51]

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reth had left his house, when they drew up on the north side of the village to take over the heifer which traditionally they must lead backwards from Debalo to Fashoda. This heifer, a brown one, had been brought into the village previously, and was already tethered in the centre. The Kwa Ojul, however, had brought with them the sheep over which the *reth* must step at Khor Arepejur.

Meanwhile the *reth's* body-guard and the Ororo were clustering round the entrance to the *reth's* hut. It was difficult to see any definite formation of clans at this point, and there was some confusion about positions, but the Kwa Okelo, and with them *Nya Awer*, who was completely surrounded by women, were in the centre of the village. Jago Yolniker Ajang, the chief of Gol Nyikang, was much in evidence and dressed in a Mrs. Gray antelope skin (Note 8), and it was presumably his traditional duty to get the assembly into some order.

From out of the *reth's* compound there first came his women attendants who had accompanied him from Fashoda and carried with them cooking materials and food in baskets (Note 9). Immediately after this the assembly drew up in roughly semi-circular formation facing the *reth's* hut and began to clap and sing in honour of the *reth*. The *reth* then appeared at the door of the homestead, and, stepping over a white sheep which had been pegged down in front of him, he stood with his back to the fence facing the multitude. The spear, wrapped in white cloth, and which together with the beads of Ocoro is collectively known as Nyikang was brought out and held beside him. After much singing and acclamation the *reth* moved forward and, heavily guarded by the Ororo, took up his position in the centre of the village. The procession was then ready to start. Kwa Ojul, who never came into the centre of the village, began to drag the heifer backwards at the front of the procession, but abandoned the attempt lower down the slope. Thenceforth it was led in the normal way, but scarcely visible for the crowds who surrounded it. The party then moved off in the direction of Fashoda, and a white bull, which had been tethered in the centre of the village alongside the heifer already mentioned.

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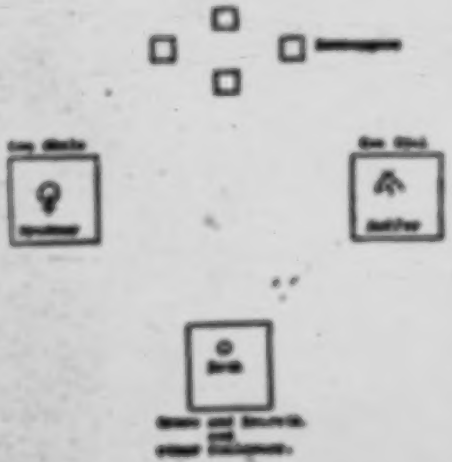
was cast and slaughtered. The procession did not move far. A violent quarrel broke out between the clansmen of Kwa Okelo and Kwa Mal. The argument arose over the privilege of sowing cowry shells in the *reth*'s path on his journey to Fashoda. Kwa Mal maintained that it was their traditional right to do so, but Jago Yoleiker had given the shells to the Kwa Okelo. The Kwa Mal considered themselves slighted, and *nyireth* Nyawelo, the eldest son of the late *reth*, who attempted to intervene, seemed to aggravate the dispute rather than settle it. Finally the custom of sowing cowry shells was abandoned altogether, as there was a complete deadlock between the parties concerned.

The procession then moved on its way down the slope to the plain below, singing and beating spear-shafts together as they went. Again they halted, and here another argument arose, this time over the shield of Nyikang, which should be carried before the *reth* (Note 10), and which had been forgotten. Informants stated that this was a small shield slightly larger than those carried by girls at play, but smaller than a fighting shield. Eventually an ordinary battle shield was produced as a substitute, and the shield-bearer took up his position in front of the *reth*. The party moved on, Kwa Ojul on the right and Kwa Okelo parallel on the left, in front of them the *reth*'s messengers and behind the main body of followers surrounding the *reth* himself :—



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The assembly had by then formed up in better order, which they retained until the *reth* stopped for refreshment. Thereafter the high grass at the side of the narrow track precluded the original formation, and Kwa Ojal went ahead, followed by Kwa Okelo, and the *reth* and the main body of the people behind. 643

On reaching the outskirts of Akwabai about half a mile from Debalo, the first messenger of the *reth* ran ahead to bear news to Nyikang of the *reth's* approach. The *reth's* messengers are said to be Kwa Otwot, and it would follow that they are members of one clan in fact they are chosen from many clans (Note 11). [614 202]

Shortly after the despatch of the first messenger, the *reth* retired to the Arab merchant's shop for rest and refreshment, and the crowds squatted down on the grass ahead. After an interval of ten minutes, the *reth* came out again, and, walking fast, took up his position with the Ouoro and Kwareth once more, and the procession moved off again in the direction of Fashoda. By this time the party had reached Khor Arepejur and spread out in a long line several ranks deep and parallel to the watercourse. The crowd was obviously larger than at Debalo, for people had been joining in en route, and late-comers had caught up. Others broke away and ran off to nearby villages, where they left their spears and collected millet stalks for the struggle with Nyikang which was to follow.

The Crossing of the Watercourse.

On the opposite side of the watercourse Jago Thalo, the titular chief of Gol Dhiang, with a small party of warriors had arrived to hand over the black bull, over which the *reth* must step before crossing Arepejur, and bearing with them a fish spear wrapped round with a grass mat, another of the many sacred spears of Nyikang. On the other side also were two members of the Kwa Mal carrying a chicken with which they swept the path of the *reth* after he had crossed over.

Just before the *reth* and his followers reached the watercourse a "dust-devil" was seen whirling down towards Fashoda and this was [773 787 84]

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a significant omen to the Shilluk, for they say that Nyikang disappeared in a dust-storm and returns with the wind.

Meanwhile those warriors who had run off to fetch millet stalks had rejoined the ranks of the *reth*'s army and already the dust raised by the host of Nyikang marching down towards Fashoda could be seen in the distance. Finally the army of Nyikang appeared on the horizon just west of Fashoda, the feathered head of Nyikang in their midst and Dak towering above them. At this point a messenger ran forward to Nyikang bearing a message from the *reth*. This man made two journeys between the opposing forces and returned for the second time just before the *reth* crossed the watercourse (No. 10 in). The *reth*, who had been standing at the head of his forces and immediately behind his shield-bearer, then walked forward and, holding the small girl *nya kwer* by the hand, stepped over the sheep which had been cast on the ground in front of him, advanced a few paces, and stepped right over the black bull which lay bound on the very edge of the watercourse, and then walked swiftly across to the other side.

The March of Nyikang from Adodo Nyigir to Fashoda.

The simultaneous advance on Fashoda by Nyikang, Dak and their followers is described by the Rev. D. McClure as follows:-

"On the morning of the induction of the Shilluk king at Fashoda we went early to the village of Adodo, in the district of Nyigir, to watch the procession of Nyikang and Dak from Adodo to Fashoda, a distance of about two miles. We arrived at the village about 7 a.m., and found the place filled with men (the women keeping to their houses), and most of them gathered about a small black bull, which was being peacefully brushed with grass and the horns brightened with oil. Then a group of twelve young men called the Gollwny led the bull outside the village, and made ready to start for Fashoda. They waited until three old men appeared from the huts, in which Nyikang and Dak were residing, each carrying a sacred spear, which they carried with the spearhead upwards; and the spear handle was never allowed to

[78]

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touch the ground, but always rested on the foot of the bearer when he stopped[15]. These three men took their place at the head of the "bull procession", and started for Fashoda.

We were told that as soon as they reached Khor Arepejur in front of Fashoda they would send messengers back to our village of Adodo and others ahead to the village of Debalo, where the king-to-be-inducted was residing. Then when the messengers arrived at the respective villages the two processions would start simultaneously from the villages about equal distance from Fashoda to meet at Khor Arepejur for the final ceremony.

After the Golbany and the old men left, preparations were made for a sacrifice inside the enclosure in front of the houses where reside Nyikang and Dak. I noticed that no one passed these houses without bowing low and saying *Kwo dilong*, which in modern parlance would be "Your Honour". A small ram was brought, and then was killed by having its throat cut. This ceremony was attended by only a few of the people gathered in the village, and the others did not seem to pay much attention to it. A few minutes later, however, a female goat was brought and tied to the enclosure, on the outside, and all the men in the village gathered and sat on the ground in an attitude of utmost respect, every man with his feet under him and the backs of his hands touching the ground in front of him. Most of the people in the village were the custodians of Nyikang and Dak and had been accompanying them on the eight-day march from the village of Akurwa, which is the traditional home of these gods. None of these men carried spears, but all were armed with whips of Nyikang, which is rather a testimony that these gods do not need clubs and spears to protect them, but men armed as women are sufficient to overcome all opposition. There were about sixty men in the group from the village of Akurwa led by their chief. As the young female goat bleated, one of the old men in the group addressed it thus, "why do you cry, are you not

[15]. This was the practice with all sacred spears, and the images of Dak and Ged as well. Nyikang of course was never put on the ground.

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happy to be given to *Kwea*"? Perhaps you too are praying just as we are? Do you know *Kwea*? He is there being guarded; soon he will come out and start his journey." Then the old man addressed Nyikang, "*Kwea*, you are great; we are all your children, even this goat, and we are here to serve you." Then the goat was led away. I asked about the goat and they said it would not be killed, but would return to the flock as a sign that all the flocks belonged to Nyikang.

About this time I heard one of the young men say he was thirsty and when I jokingly asked him if there was no beer in the village for them, he said that no beer would be drunk that day in all the land, until after the king had been inducted at Fashoda.

I asked about the gods and they said they were being prepared for the journey and soon would come out of the houses. The houses were not shrines but belonged to the chief of the village, and nothing had been done to them except a new fence of cornstalks built around the door. I asked if I might go inside the enclosure, and when no one objected, I entered the *kal*, and found six men seated on the ground and two sacred drums one on each side of the door of the house, each on a cow skin. I took some pictures of the *kal* with the men and drums, but when I suggested that I enter the house where Nyikang resided, they demurred, and one man took up a position against the mat door, to bar my entrance.

At 8.50 the two drums were beaten five or six strokes each, and I thought things were going to start, but all the people bowed themselves to the ground and said, "*Kwea* speaks. *Kwea*, you are great *Kwea*, speak to us."

Five minutes later, two young men came out of the *kal* carrying the sacred drums (small black drums not unlike kettle drums), and each sat on a cow-skin and alternately beat his drum with the handle of a hippo-hide whip. (These drums they call *tkem*). The beat was not that of a dance, but a regular tum, ta, ta, ta, tum; repeated over

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Kwea—our ancestor.

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and over. The men beat alternately, and were accompanied by the people seated on the ground in front of them chanting together, " *Kwaa*, you are great, *Kwaa*, you are great."

A few minutes later young men brought out bundles of sticks and ropes called *ongere*, which had been brought from the Fanyikang district near Tonga.

At 9.15 a messenger appeared from Fashoda and the tempo of the drums was increased. Soon everyone in the village (including the women who had been keeping close to their houses) was seated in front of the houses. As the beat increased the people began to chant together " *Kwaa dibong, Kwaa dibong* ", and to lean forwards and backwards. One man asked me why I did not place my hands on the ground and say " *Kwaa dibong* ", and when I asked him if one should worship with the lips or with the heart, he quickly got the point, and said it was bad to worship only with the lips, for Nyikang would know. Then four men appeared with baskets on their heads over which were spread small mats. On inquiry I was told that no one knew just what was in the baskets, but on later inquiry I discovered they were the " things of Nyikang " such as his shoes, cloth, beads, food, and the like. At this point an old woman appeared from the house, and I was told she had been preparing Nyikang for the journey, and she was called *nyakwer* (Note 13) or *nyibang Nyikang* (slave of Nyikang). It seems she is something of a priestess in that she takes care of Nyikang at the village of Akurwa and resides in the temple of Nyikang. She now led the people in song, a few words of which I was able to get, and which were as follows :—" Open your mouth, Great One, and speak to us. Tell us what you are going to bring to us. Promise us the things we beg of you." This was repeated over and over with the old woman leading and the others following antiphonally.

The point behind the song is that these people of Akurwa are guardians of Nyikang, and they will not stir out of their village unless the new king promises them great riches. The new king had promised

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643 782 so many cows, sheep, spears, etc., and now the people were thrusting themselves upon Nyikang to make sure these things would be delivered to them. They were begging Nyikang to speak to them and assure them that the things would be forthcoming. In all the ceremonies I witnessed the element of begging was paramount, the people begging Nyikang to speak to them and promise them "things of the [781] earth" to enrich them. The element of worship and adoration was singularly lacking. (Note 14)

643 778 After this song everyone turned their backs to the opening of the *kal* (enclosure), and the drums started to beat again. This time the people were silent, and soon Dak appeared and came out of the enclosure. Dak was about twelve feet high, carried on a long bamboo pole. The body of the figure was about eighteen inches long and approximately five inches thick, of a cylindrical shape wrapped about with blue and white checked cloth. It was crowned with a splendid plume of ten to dozen ostrich feathers, all black. Dak was carried by a middle aged man, and I was told that he would receive 'great riches' for his work, probably three or four cows. Dak circled the house three times and then came to rest again at the entrance. At [782] this time two sheep were sacrificed, one at the door of the *kal* and the other beside the road in the direction of Fashoda. These sheep were allowed to lie where their throats had been cut, but I noticed later that, as soon as the procession had passed, the women of the village went out and dragged them in to be eaten.

As Dak stood at the entrance, the drums changed their beat and everyone began to chant "*Kwaa*, you are great". Then Nyikang appeared out of the house and took his place beside Dak. He was carried by a man of middle age. Nyikang was much larger in body than Dak, though not nearly so tall. I estimated the body of the figure as being about five feet long and a foot thick. It was wrapped in the same cloth as Dak and crowned with a much more profuse plume of ostrich feathers. Two long streamers fell away from the head and

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were as long as the body. Dak could rest on the ground[17] on the end of the bamboo pole, but Nyikang was never taken off the shoulder of the man carrying him.

As the procession started another sheep was sacrificed and the blood sprinkled on the ground in front of the marching men. Dak and Nyikang led side by side, with the two drummers taking their positions on each side and constantly beating the drums. The men with the six baskets came next, and then the men with bundles of sticks and ropes. Finally all the followers fell in behind.

The village was circled three times at a half trot, all keeping time with the drums, and then they started for Fashoda at 9.30 a.m. Relatively few people were in the procession as they started, but hundreds began to gather in from all sides until there were approximately six hundred followers when they reached the *kel ui jang* (place of calling together). Two hours were required for the procession to go two miles, for there was much dancing and singing, moving forward and again backwards, along the whole way. As the people danced along in rhythm to the drumbeat they also sang "open your mouth, Great One, and bring us your promises" or "open your mouth and answer our buggings." From time to time Dak would run out ahead as if to survey the road, and then come back to his place beside Nyikang. If the people crowded too close, Dak would run after them, and everyone would scatter as if the devil were after them.

On reaching a spot within half a mile of Fashoda the procession stopped and waited until messengers had gone to meet the king's party coming from Debalo. They brought back with them some cattle tethering ropes as tokens of the cows and bulls to be paid. One or two of these were refused by the elders who were gathered under a tree, and the messengers had to go back again. Finally all was arranged, and with much shouting and drum beating, the procession started for Fashoda to meet and fight with the followers of the approaching king.

17. We think that Dak never rested directly on the ground but on the bearer.

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THE FIRST DAY OF THE INSTALLATION.

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S41

5.—The battle between the two armies outside Fushoda.

6.—After the battle the colt is seized by Pythong and led off to Fushoda. The colt is succeeded by Pythong.

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643 [778] Just as the king's party was sighted, four men came out of Fashoda carrying the sacred shield and spear of Nyikang. As Nyikang and Duk approached this group there was something of a scuffle, as if the shield and spear were loath to join the procession. But after a short sham battle and much waving of spear and shield, they were persuaded to march with Nyikang, and the procession again moved on to meet the king and his followers at Khor Arepejur in front of Fashoda. This 643 941 is the traditional battle ground, on which the forces of the king and those of Nyikang join in a great sham battle, both sides using corn stalks instead of spears, and fighting until the followers of Nyikang overcome the guardians of the king and capture the king to carry him away into Fashoda.

The two armies were now drawn up facing one another, the host of Nyikang awaiting to join battle with the *reth* and holding the high ground to the west of the capital.

The Battle

(P.P.H.)

As soon as the *reth* had crossed the watercourse, he and his army advanced at a fast pace in the direction of the host of Nyikang, who had remained on the high ground opposite Fashoda. When the distance between the two parties was no more than two hundred yards the shield-bearer of the king moved forward, and began to dance in a threatening manner, dodging and retreating and advancing in the direction of Nyikang. Small parties of warriors broke away brandishing their millet stalks in the air. The warlike attitude of the opposing armies became apparent. The Kwa Nyikwom who were leading the army of Nyikang began to move, and a few of them broke away in front, brandishing their whips and ropes. Women in the background cried out in exultation and encouragement, and with wild shouts and hollows the armies fell upon each other. The air was filled with flying millet stalks, and such was the confusion that it is difficult to record accurately what happened, but the *reth's* army was considered to be repelled,

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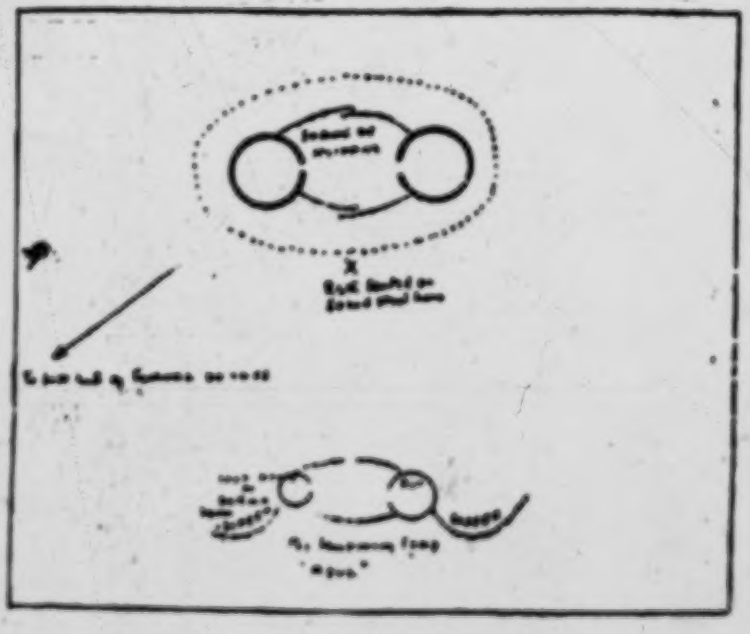

THE SHRINE OF THE RUMJOKWOT

[FACING P. 61]

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and the *reth* himself captured by Nyikang. Shortly after the first onslaught he was seen in the midst of a crowd of Kwa Nyikwom, cut off from his own followers, and as the procession moved on towards Fashoda he took up, or was forced to take up, his position under the shadow of Nyikang, clasping the effigy with both arms and the black ostrich feathers screening his face.

The eldest son of Fafiti then remarked with relief *"rony arum,"* "the installation is assured", meaning that the great crisis was passed.

The Reth carried off to the Shrine by Nyikang.

The party with Nyikang and the *reth* in their midst then turned towards Fashoda, and walked slowly in the direction of the cleared space which marks the pool of Cerfuc (Note 15). The drums of Nyikang, of which there are two sets, and which accompanied Nyikang from Akurwa, were carried in front and beaten with the rhythm characteristic of the march of Nyikang. The procession drew up to the cleared space called Cerfuc and halted. In the middle were a group of people clustered together. They were the Kwa Okelo, who were engaged in wrapping the brown heifer from head to tail in white cloth (Note 16). When this had been done, they remained in the centre of the square while Nyikang, with the *reth* immediately behind him and apparently entangled in the cloth wrappings which hang down from the head of the effigy, processed three times round them. With much singing and drumming the party then faced the shrine of Nyikang, while the Kwa Okelo speared the heifer, and tore off the white wrappings, which immediately were seized and carried away by the crowds as sacred relics.

The Enthronement and Substitution.

After the spearing of the heifer, the *reth*, still closely led by Nyikang, advanced towards the shrine. Meanwhile the canopy of white cloth, which is held up to screen the sacred stool (Note 17) of the Shilluk from

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643 [178] the public gaze, and the ox-hides upon which it is placed, had already been brought out and set up at the entrance of the shrine, and the stool itself, heavily swathed in white cloth, was hurriedly carried out. Behind stood a Shilluk holding the fish-spear of Dak, which was also wrapped in white cloth. The party escorted by the Kwa Nyikwom with Dak well to the fore then moved up to the canopy, and the effigy of Nyikang was set upon the stool, while the *reth* knelt down and clasped the legs on the north side. The chief of Kwa Nyikwom knelt down and clasped the legs on the other side, and *nyakwer* seated herself to one side of the *reth*. After a long period of much chanting but no visible movement, the effigy of Nyikang was lifted from the stool and hurried into the shrine immediately followed by Dak, and the new *reth* took his place upon the sacred stool of the Shilluk, facing the crowd, but still well screened by the canopy. The place of the *reth* holding the stool for Nyikang was now taken by the *jal tyel kwom reth* (chamberlain). It was not possible to follow all the ceremonial which followed. The party was screened on three sides by the canopy, and the *reth* himself was surrounded by functionaries. The *reth* himself, seated on the stool but screened by the canopy, was facing the crowd, and the chamberlain and another Shilluk knelt on either side to hold the legs of the stool, while *nyakwer* was sitting on the ground to his left. In front was held the sacred spear of Nyikang, which had accompanied the *reth* from Debalo. The majority of the crowd had already dispersed and either took no further interest in the procedure or were not allowed to do so, and those who were watching close at hand were for the most part Kwareth, Ororo, or the attendants of Nyikang. Nevertheless this was the crisis of the ceremonies. The act of substitution upon the stool symbolizes to the Shilluk the possession of the *reth* by the spirit of Nyikang, and we saw that the *reth* was seized with a trembling fit at the critical moment, and certainly he appeared to be in a dazed condition immediately afterwards, when he walked across to the temporary camp opposite the shrine.

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After sitting on the stool for about twenty minutes, facing the people, still screened by the canopy, the *reth* arose and escorted by the chief of the Kwa Nyikwom, who held his right hand, and by *nyakwer*,

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who held his left, walked across the open space in front of the shrine. Here another ox, this time a black and white one, also swathed in white cloth and covered over the back with a leopard-skin decorated at the edges with cowrie shells, was tethered. Beside it stood two men of Kwa Ojul, one holding a crude straight-bladed sword, the other holding a spear. These were said to be yet further weapons of Nyikang, and each in turn was handed to the *reth*, who stood at the tail end of the ox, and with each he made three passes in the air over the back of the ox, which was then led off to be sacrificed.

The Temporary Camp

After this ceremony, the *reth*, still accompanied by the chief of Kwa Nyikwom and by the small girl *nyakwer*, entered the screen, which surrounded the temporary huts, and he himself entered the larger of them. These huts were built under the personal supervision of Jago Yor Leiker and Jago Tabo, the chiefs of the south and north. The huts were built of grass, and similar to those built in Shilluk cattle camps. The larger was considered the *reth*'s temporary residence, the smaller the kitchen, where his food should be prepared and where the water was heated for the ritual bathing. The bull mentioned above was stripped of its coverings, which were again torn to pieces by the crowd, and the leopard skin was taken into the shrine of Nyikang. The bull was speared and fell to the ground immediately in front of the *reth*'s temporary camp. After this the public part of the first day's ceremonies was over. The *reth* had retired into seclusion, and those Shilluk who had remained to watch the ceremony of the stool soon dispersed and went off to rest in the shade around Fashoda. Only the Oturo, Kwareth and Kwa Nyikwom, the immediate attendants of the *reth*, remained to guard him and minister to his wants.

The effigies of Nyikang and Dak had already been carried into the shrine. The drums were also put away, and the sacred stool, which had been carelessly left with the canopy draped over it, was carried off, the canopy held around it so that no one could see it go.

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643 to the mound of Fashoda, which is called Aturwic, and with it the shield and spears of Nyikang.

The *reth* was now in seclusion. No one but his most personal attendants might visit him. We were told that he would be stripped, bathed, and clothed in new robes during that afternoon. It was neither seemly nor possible to enquire too deeply into this part of the investiture, for it is conducted in strict secrecy. There is evidence that this ritual bathing takes place within the temporary camp Adul, because the smaller of the two huts is known as the "bathing room." Shilluk say that the *reth* is bathed alternately with hot and cold water, so that he shall not be subjected to extremes of temperature. It is a symbolic rite emphasizing his people's desire that he shall rule them with even temper throughout his reign. The fact is mentioned by [119] Munro in his account of Fafiti's installation (Note 18), and informants confirmed the tradition at the installation of *reth* Anei.

During the heat of the day the main crowds dispersed to their homes, but there were still large numbers of Shilluk sitting in and around Fashoda that evening. Most of these were relatives and friends of the inhabitants of the capital, who provided them with [272] refreshment, since the ban on drinking beer was lifted after the *reth's* retirement. The Orore and attendants of the *reth* were putting up wind-screens round the *reth's* camp, under which they would sleep [669] that night to guard him from possible attack. The danger to the *reth's* life was not yet over, a fact which repeatedly appeared from the care and attention of his guardians. The Shilluk describe this period of the ceremonies as "*the reth's camp outside* Fashoda", and it was evident that he had not, in the eyes of the Shilluk, entered his capital. His final acceptance by Nyikang and by the Shilluk people still remained in doubt, though one of the most dangerous periods of his initiation from election to final installation had been successfully passed.

The same evening outside the shrine of Nyikang some of the

The same evening outside the shrine of Nyikang some of the Kwa Nyikwom were gathered and busily engaged in the spiritual decontamination of persons who had obstructed the passage of Nyikang on his march to Fashoda. These persons had incurred the displeasure of Nyikang, and were in grave danger of their lives, unless steps were taken by the Kwa Nyikwom to remove the curse by rites of purification. The two parties concerned were seated about two yards apart. Each had a potsherd filled with smouldering grass in front of him. The attendant member of the Kwa Nyikwom cut off about half an inch of the hippo whip he carried and burnt it in the embers. His victim then blew upon the embers, which burst into flame, but were extinguished with water. The ashes were removed and the victim anointed with them on the back, chest, palms and soles. For this privilege each handed over a chicken and a spear as a fine for a breach of traditional observance in hindering the path of Nyikang.

The Making of New Fire at Fashoda.

Just before dusk a group of Ororo and Kwareth began to gather near one of the wind-screens at the side of the temporary camp. All fires in Fashoda had been extinguished. A wooden club of no special origin or sanctity was brought and the shaft of a spear detached from the blade. A small hole was pierced in the handle of the club, and the spearshaft sharpened to fit this hole. The ritual kindling of fire which followed was no different from the normal method of fire-making with sticks, except that several persons co-operated in twirling the shaft. One man held the club firmly to the ground, while each man twirled the shaft in turn, the hands of the second starting at the top of the shaft, as soon as the first man's hands had reached the middle. A continuous twirling motion was thus maintained. The tinder in the hole soon began to smoulder and grass was added and in a short time burst into flames. The fact that no difficulty had been encountered and that the fire had been kindled quickly was regarded as a good omen. Men and women who had been sitting nearby came up to light their pipes from the fire, and embers were carried off in all directions to relight the fires of Fashoda. The making

[i.e., the day of the enthronement of the Reth - Arnoldi]

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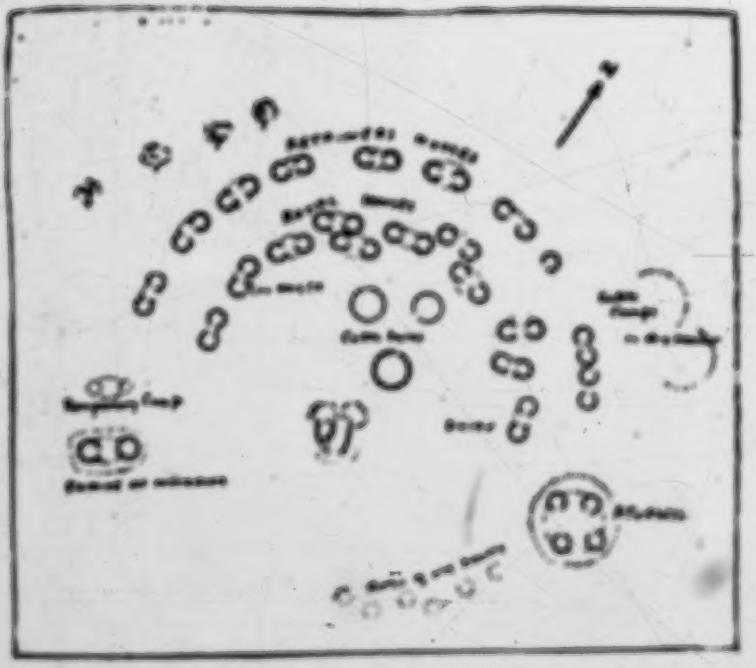

SKETCH PLAN OF FAGHOOA

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643 of fire ceremonially at Debalo has already been mentioned. This ceremony completed the first day. Nothing further occurred, though members of the Kwar Nyikwom danced and sang during the night, and sporadic drumming could be heard until the early hours of the morning.

INTERVAL.

During the two days after the *reth's* formal installation on the sacred stool no public ceremonies occurred. The *reth*, still in strict seclusion, moved only at night, and the rites enacted were conducted in secrecy. To the bulk of the people his whereabouts remained unknown. It appears that he spent one night in Adul (11th—12th March) and that the ceremony of tying on the sacred bead of Acoro took place on the morning of the 12th March. It was not possible [124] to witness any of these rites, and inquiries were met with evasion. An air of reticence and mystery veiled the scene. On the evening of the 12th and after dark, the *reth* went up into the mound Aturwic, and it is said he was enticed away by a woman of the Ororo (*nyaroro*), leaving behind him *nyakwer*, the girl of Kwa Okel who had accompanied him from Debalo. During the night of 13th-14th the *reth* visited Dhidu, a house which is below the mound of Aturwic and nearest of all houses to it. This visit must also remain a mystery. Answers [124] were evasive and probably deliberately misleading, though some informants said it was the house occupied by the Ororo girl.

THE FOURTH DAY.

643 The ceremonies of the fourth day centre round the person of
644 *nyakwer* and emphasise the continued opposition between Nyikang and the *reth*-elect. *Nyakwer*, "the girl of the ceremonies", who is provided for the occasion by the Kwa Okel, and who accompanied the *reth* from Debalo, had entered the temporary camp Adul with the *reth*. Thus far her status and the part she plays in the ceremonies had remained obscure. It was not clear whether she could be regarded

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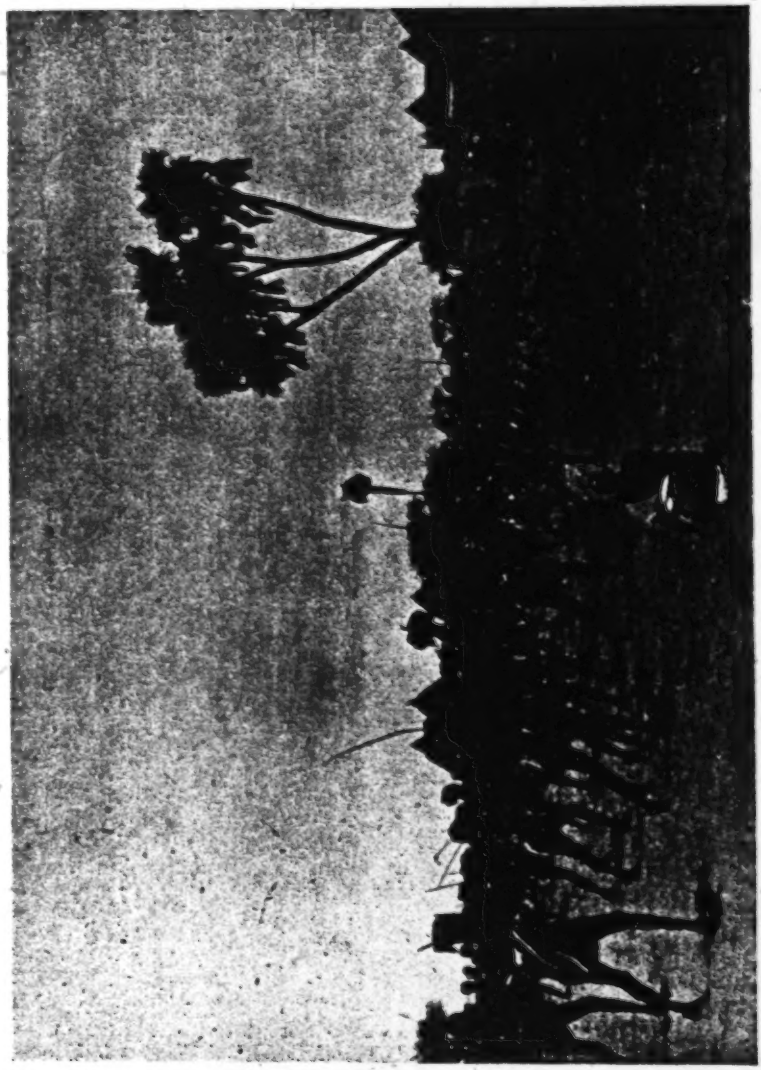

THE FOURTH DAY OF THE INSTALLATION.

The army of Nyikang led by the Kwa Nyikwom and brandishing whips and ropes charges through Fashoda towards the *nuk*.

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as the wife of the *reth* or not. The answer depended on the cattle which had been handed over to the Kwa Okel by the *reth*, and whether they are considered bride-wealth or merely a reward for her services, in the same way as the sheep and cattle given to other expert functionaries who assist. The Shilluk say that the girl does not remain the wife of the *reth* and is handed to some favoured subject after the ceremonies are over. Up to this period in the ceremonies it was therefore problematical to us whether she is regarded as wife at all. The world *kwer* means literally "ceremony or ritual", and the girl is sometimes called *nyaroiny*, *roiny* being the term used for the induction ceremonies. This gives no clue to her status, but points to the ritual nature of her functions. The ceremonial acting of the fourth day, however, makes it quite clear that the cattle are indeed bride-wealth, and that she is regarded as the *reth's* wife, at any rate for the duration of the ceremonies. 643 644

According to tradition, *nyikwer*, remains with the *reth* in seclusion in the temporary camp outside Fashoda until the second night, when he is enticed away by a girl of the Ororo, who induces him to follow her up into the mound called Aturwic. *Nyikwer*, neglected and forgotten, is left in the temporary camp, until Nyikang steals out from his shrine and carries her off with him. Only on the morning of the fourth day does the *reth* notice her absence and call for an explanation. The chief of the Kwa Okel, "the father of the girl", is summoned by the chief of Gol Dhiang, and is questioned by the *reth*. He denies all knowledge of her whereabouts. "Why do you not know?" demands the *reth*, "Have I not married her with cattle which are now in your possession? Go, bring her back to me." The chief of Kwa Okel goes off in search of her, but returns shortly afterwards to say that he has heard that Nyikang has seized her. He is ordered by the *reth* to fetch her, and goes off to request her return from Nyikang, using the *jago* of the Kwa Nyikwom as an intermediary. "Whose cattle are these?" says Nyikang, "Are they the *reth's* or are they mine?" (Note 19). The *jago* of Kwa Okel returns to the *reth*

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THE FOURTH DAY OF THE INSTALLATION.
Nyikang and Dak go up into the mound Aturwic to make peace with the *reth*.

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THE FIFTH DAY : SPEECH DAY.
The *reth* comes down from Aturwic.
He is second from the left and dressed in a Mrs. Gray antelope skin, and behind him is the fan made from the wings of a Saddle-bill Stork.

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643 644 with news of Nyikang's refusal, but is again sent to fetch her, this time accompanied by the chief of the Gol Nyikang. On their repeating the *reth's* demand Nyikang falls into a fury of rage and cries out that he will punish this presumptuous young upstart, who lays such outrageous demands on his property. Immediately he calls for his drummers, who beat out a tattoo summoning his warriors to war. The two envoys of the *reth* return to warn him of Nyikang's anger, and once more the two armies prepare for battle.

643 541 This is the traditional explanation of the cause of the second battle, and the tradition was faithfully enacted. Early that morning Jago Ajang of the Kwa Okel was summoned to Aturwic and was seen later searching for *nyakwer*. After talking with the Kwa Nyikwom outside the shrine he went back to Aturwic and returned accompanied by Jago Yor Leiker, the chief of Gol Nyikang. Together they entered the shrine, but hurried out almost immediately, and the drums of Nyikang began to beat. The Kwa Nyikwom and other followers of Nyikang, both male and female, clustered round the shrine, and the drummers continued to beat the drums either seated inside the withy fence, which surrounds the shrine, or walking round the whole building. An ox-hide was laid in the open space between the shrines and the temporary huts, and the drums placed thereon. 533 535 Nyikang's followers began to dance and sing, the words of the song indicating that Nyikang was angered, and that the *reth* should appease him. The dance continued for some time, the dancers working themselves into a frenzy of excitement, leaping high into the air with arms stretched above them. Suddenly Nyikang and Dak appeared at the entrance of the shrine, and the army began to collect round them. Led by Dak they encircled the shrine three times, and then marched off to the hut known as *gol onger*, where the ropes of Dak and the whips are kept. The Kwa Nyikwom armed themselves with these and moved forward towards the mound, with Dak and Nyikang at their head. 778 At this point another effigy appeared, a smaller one with grey (female) ostrich-feathers for the head and a slim body of twined rope. This was Cal another son of Nyikang. (Note 20).

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Meanwhile the army of the *reth* was gathering below Aturwic, and the *reth*, dressed in white with a Mrs. Gray skin draped round him and five ivory bracelets on each arm, descended among them. Armed with millet stalks, they began to move slowly forwards in a threatening manner towards the army of Nyikang. When only a hundred yards separated them, a violent argument broke out about the bull, which should have been provided for the occasion to be tied down and walked over by the combatants (Note 21). Both parties retired and the *reth* went up on to the mound again, where he could be seen standing at the central entrance, a long millet stalk in his hand. Nyikang, Dak, and Cal retreated to a point just outside the shrine. After a long delay the bull was brought and placed between the two armies, who advanced, and the *reth* in front of his army walked forward to throw the first spear (millet stalk), which fell at the feet of Dak. Millet stalks began to fly, and in the general mêlée, the *reth* rushed forward with a small escort and wrested *nyakwer* from Nyikang, and hustled her away through the ranks of his warriors up to the mound behind them. Three furious counter-attacks followed by the Kwa Nyikwom, who dashed forward waving and whirling their ropes and whips. Finally, with Nyikang and Dak and Cal, at their head, they reached the bottom of the mound and went up to the huts on top. Shortly afterwards Nyikang and Dak descended from the mound. It was said that all hostility between Nyikang and the *reth* was now at an end, and that Nyikang had accepted him as his successor. Then they started on a tour of all the huts in Fashoda. This was considered an inspection of the houses, and those sections of Shilluk who are traditionally called upon to repair them were fined by Nyikang if they had not done so. The fines were one head of cattle each, and one chief was fined for initiating a song, the privilege of the Kwa Nyikwom. This part of the ceremonies was taken lightheartedly, and the victims subjected to much witticism.

Nyikang, Dak and Cal then retired to the shrine. They took no further part in the ceremonies and did not appear in public until

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SPEECH DAY.

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1.—Each chief, after making his speech, sticks a spear into the ground before the *reth* as a sign of homage.

2.—The *reth's* party below Aturwic, with the spears and shield of Nyikang. The drummer in front is beating a tattoo as a sign of appreciation of the speech just delivered.

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643 their return journey to Akurwa some weeks later. The *reth* himself remained up on the mound, while the crowds dispersed to their homes or sat about drinking and chatting round the houses of Fashoda.

(W.P.G.T.)

The final ceremonies on 15th. March consisted of a general assembly of all important chiefs and elders from all over the Shilluk country. Speeches were made, mostly of exhortation. The *reth* was confirmed [693] as supreme judge of the Shilluk people; and finally he was ceremonially shown round Fashoda by the chief of the Kwa Nyikang stopping at each house in turn.

The scene was laid in the open space south of Aturwic, and all [202] the chiefs had been summoned by drum in the early morning. At [778] the bottom of the mound we noticed the *kwom* (sacred stool), draped in white cloth as before; two spears, one wrapped in cloth, were held by bearers, one on each side of the *kwom*, and a small kettle-drum shaped like a basin, the property of the Kwa Wung who live mostly round Detwok, was set on the ground close by with its drummer. The lancebearers and the drummer were all from Kwa Wung.

Facing this stage were the assembled chiefs and elders of the Shilluk, with no conspicuous absentees, each one sitting down holding a spear. There was a clear space of some ten yards between the *kwom* and the chiefs.

In front of the entrance to the huts on Aturwic there was a sheep held tethered. Shortly the *reth* emerged from the huts followed by a group of women, wives and sisters: he and his important entourage were dressed in white with Mrs. Gray skins over the garments.

After stepping over the tethered sheep, the *reth* was led down [644] the slope by the chief of the Kwa Nyikang. His retainers followed him, and most of them stepped over the sheep too; when he reached [293] the bottom of the slope he was lifted on to the sacred stool, and sat facing the chiefs with his retainers grouped behind him: immediately

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behind him was a bearer carrying a fan made from both wings of the Saddle-billed stork joined in the middle like the letter W. He was wearing a silver bracelet on each wrist, and came down from the mound carrying two spears, each head downwards. After being seated on the stool, these spears were taken back by the chief of the Kwa Nyikang to Aturwic. A big white bull was then brought by the Ororo and tied to a stake north of the assembly.

Then the chiefs came forward one by one carrying a spear, head downwards: sometimes two got up together and a short argument arose, but the question was quickly settled by precedence. Some forty or fifty chiefs and elders each had their say in turn, and after each speech the spokesman thrust his spear into the ground: if his speech met with approval (not we think the approval of the *reth* but of the drummer) he was given a tattoo on the drum, and escorted part of the way back to his place by the drummer drumming. The distance he was escorted depended on the merit of his speech. One chief, of Bur Nyiliec, came with no spear, and instead he laid a small object, probably a bead, reverently on the ground.

Most of the speeches, each of which lasted between two and five minutes, were rather trite; the following is a resumé of the more common or interesting points:-

"Anei has been elected *reth* without dissentient voice; all the Shilluk from Mwomo up to Tonga want him as their *reth*."

"All classes of Shilluk society, *kwa reth*, *bang reth*, and *colo* recognize you, Anei, as *reth*, for there was no fight on your appointment."

"The *reth* is alone and has no favourites."

"Assist your chiefs and help them to keep order."

A somewhat discordant note was struck by the chief of Tonga: "our job is not to keep order; that is your job. Our duty is to supply you with choice morsels of hippo meat."

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537 An untraditional but common topic was: "The Government
631 needs no introduction, you and it must co-operate; it is not like the
643 Dervishes or Turkia; you must help to collect its taxes."

644 The speeches opened with Jago Yor Leiker, the chief of Gol Nyikang, and Jago Tabo, the chief of Gol Dhiang, and finished with the chiefs of the marches Jago Ongwany of Mwomo and Jago Ding of Tonga. Each chief stuck the spear into the ground before the *reth* when his speech was ended, so that there remained a veritable forest of spears in front of the *reth* after the speech-making was over.

After Jago Ding's speech there was a short silence, after which the company started a chant to Nyikang and the *reth*. Then the *reth* got up and addressed his people, for now for the first time he was truly installed on the stool of Nyikang, and was fully become *reth*. "I have become your *reth*", he said, "and I will rule you and justify those who are aggrieved."

643 The assembly then arose, and the *reth* moved over to where the
782 white bull was tied. He made passes over its back with a spear, and retired. The Ororo came up, and after an abortive attempt which bent the spear, they stabbed the bull. The spears stuck in the ground were taken, some by Jago Yor Leiker, some by the men of Akwobai, who had gone to Kosti; and some by Kwa Wung.

643 After this came the final ceremony. The *reth*, accompanied
644 by a few chosen followers, was introduced to each house in Fashoda by the chief of Kwa Nyikang. There are many sites in the south east side of Fashoda where there used, in the days of *reth* Fadiet, to be houses, but Fashoda is smaller now. Tradition is strong however, and the *reth* was solemnly introduced to those sites, and told their names, and whose responsibility it was to rebuild them. When he came to the favourite house of his father *reth* Kur, a sheep was brought and prostrated before the door. The *reth* stepped over it and passed into the house, and the installation ceremonies were ended.

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PART IV.—SEQUEL.

Fertility Rites and Rain-Making.

(i) After his installation the *reth* took a day or two to recover, and we are told that about a week later, a hornless cow, the colour of a hippopotamus was sacrificed by the *reth* on the river bank. This was done to make the hippopotamus increase, and prosper the Shilluk hunters. 643 789 782

(ii) There was a slight hitch over the rain-making ceremony, which we are informed by Mr. L. W. A. Raven, takes place in the early rains each year. The *reth* is said to slaughter a bull the colour of the rain clouds. We asked the *reth* about this, and he said "Oh, it has been done at Fanyikang already by the chief of Kwa Nyikang." Resulting from this departure from custom, after only light showers, one on the last day of the installation, the rains were late, and by the end of June the *reth* was worried. The sequel is interesting. An old woman of Lemmo section dreamed of the departed *reth*. This showed that his spirit had not been laid to rest properly, and had not the Funeral Dance been cut short by two days? So another and smaller funeral dance of two days duration was held on the 2nd. and 3rd. July, at the same village of Pareth Fafiti. A few days later it started to pour with rain, and continued, so that it was for the Shilluk a year of plenty. 643 789 787 766

POSTSCRIPT

(W.P.G.T.)

On 6th, April I visited Fashoda on business. Three days previously the *reth* had told me in a matter of fact way that he was going to finish off the party from Akurwa, and give them their dues, and then "they could do as they pleased, but he, the *reth*, was finished with them." Their dues were 10 head of cattle. By the 6th. I fancied this would all be over, however as I approached I met about six men carrying hides and about ten women carrying household utensils 643

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643 on their heads. I recognised them as Kwa Nyikwom going back to Akurwa. Their return had been hastened by the early rain.

778 643 535 Fashoda had the party spirit, particularly the *reth*. He at once led me to the centre of Fashoda and I sat down in the shade of a cattle byre to be inconspicuous, for something was about to happen. Nyikang, Dak and Cal were all packed up and ready to go to Akurwa. They were in fact all three standing outside Aturwic. Everyone was dancing and singing.

The *reth* went up the mound and spoke to the people carrying Nyikang. Suddenly Dak and Cal followed by Nyikang came down from the mound and made a bee-line for me.

They rushed to where I was sitting and started dancing at me two paces away. The *reth* was dancing with them. They continued dancing till I gave them the token small piece of grass, which represented a bull, which I would give them at Kodok. They then went on, and did the same to any of the chiefs they found at Fashoda. The chief of Lul knew the honour would cost him a bull, and so he stayed discreetly in his house.

When Nyikang had thus gathered what he wanted for the journey home, they all danced round and round for an hour or more with the *reth* beside them. Then they became more solemn and as a final gesture they stood the *reth* under the folds of Nyikang's wrappings and sang the songs of Nyikang. The casting of the mantle of [777] Nyikang over the new *reth* was to bring him back luck. Nyikang, Dak, 643 the *reth* and the *reth's jal tyel kwom*, his chamberlain, were in the middle 778 of the small throng. The Ororo woman, who had enticed him away from *nyakwer* at the time of the installation, and some of the *reth's* sisters, were sitting around in front. I was about 10 paces away. [787] A small girl by my side swooned, and was possessed by Nyikang— [793] when she grew up, she would have charge of one of his shrines.

Then at last the party formed up and dashed off at a trot, on their way. The *reth* escorted them about 200 yards, and then came back. "Come and have a bowl of beer," he said "because it is hot."

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Such was the atmosphere as Nyikang left for home after his thirtieth installation. 643 778

NOTES

1. The Great Divisions of the Shilluk Kingdom. The Shilluk kingdom is divided into two parts in two different ways. An archaic religious division into two "sees" called Gol Nyikang (south) and Gol Dhiang (north) seems only to be important on ceremonial occasions such as the installation of the *reth* or the rebuilding of Fashoda. Each "see" has one ceremonial chief. 631 616

Investigation has shown that these two "sees" are not coterminous with the two great temporal provinces of Gerr and Luak. The traditional boundary between Gerr (northern province) and Luak (southern province) is some 15 miles south of Fashoda between the sections of Both and Fathau. The sections from Both northwards to Yoiny are small sections composed of a succession of small villages, which the Shilluk liken to the beads of an ostrich eggshell necklace and call collectively Wirek (an ostrich eggshell necklace).

In the 19th. century there was opposition between Gerr and Luak over rival candidates for the *reth*ship, when the Turkish Government tried to get Ajang accepted as *reth*, and between Akol and Kur, Gerr supporting Ajang and Kur, and Luak supporting Kwikwon and Akol. 616 631 669 643

When the two great provinces mobilized against each other for civil war, for their organization is primarily military, the small sections of Wirek were overawed or defeated by the forces of Luak, though they should have mobilized with Gerr, and they turned traitor.

After *reth* Kur returned from Omdurman and defeated the forces of Akol (Luak and Wirek) and exiled Akol, the old boundary was restored, and Wirek returned once more to Gerr.

This is one of the few occasions when we diverge from Pumphrey's account of the Shilluk *S.N.R.* Vol. 24 p. 27 ("The Shilluk Tribe"). The distinction between the two sets of divisions becomes clearer when dealing with an occasion such as the installation of the *reth*. [114]

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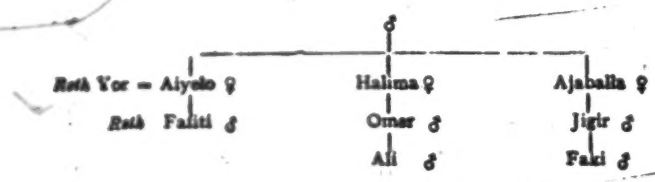
NOTE TO INTRODUCTION.

000 2. Sir Samuel Baker. *Ismeilia* p. 102.

NOTES TO PART I

644 3. The relationship of the two most important men among the late *reth*'s maternal relatives is recorded below :—



Ali and Faki, descendants of Fafiti's mother's sisters, were present.

643 648 The Nuba of the Fungor area have considerable traditional connection with the Shilluk. The bamboos for Nyikang's body are brought from here, and gifts are exchanged between the *reth* and the local Nuba chief, whom we met at Fashoda some time after the installation when he was being invested with the insignia of a Shilluk chief.

643 361 103 4. *Reth* Fafiti was brought up in a village in Kodok section, but after 1917 the supporters of Coti Ajang were too numerous for comfort in Kodok section, and Fafiti, in fear of assassination, moved his village to Golbainy and called it Abogathow "fear of death."

534 766 643 5. The royal Shilluk drums had special houses built for them in Fashoda, and special custodians appointed for them. These drums no longer exist. Shilluk say that *reth* Fafiti, angered because *reth* Fadiet had held no funeral dance for *reth* Kus hurled the royal drums into the Nile, and held the dance for *reth* Fadiet with Fadiet's own drums. For the funeral dance of a *reth* (*wowo*) the drums are stood up on end in shallow holes prepared in the ground, and beaten with newly cut sticks of the *heglig* tree. For other funeral dances, the drums are mounted horizoutally upon forked sticks.

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6. *Costumes.* All the warriors wore "war paint", their faces smeared with red, a mixture of brick dust and oil. Hair wigs and feather crests were worn by most men, including chiefs, who had no elaborate head-dresses of their own hair. Skins were worn as well as cloth. Leopard skins were worn, largely by wives of the late *reth*, and by *kwa reth* and chiefs, and the skins of the Mrs. Gray antelope and cob by those to whom they had been presented by Fafiti. An interesting feature was the senior wife, who was clad in the deceased's clothes, his special cloak (*lau*), cummerbund, and sash, and the Scottish International Rugby cap which had been presented to Fafiti by Mr. P. Munro. The cap had aged a lot in the last few years, but has established itself as part of the regalia, and the new *reth* requested that a substitute be found for him for the ceremonies.

NOTES TO PART 3

7. The *reth* could not start without *nyakwer*. Her status and significance are discussed in the text of the fourth day's ceremonies. It is possible that the lateness of the Kwa Okel was due to a conventional reluctance to produce the girl.

8. Important personages in the ceremony, and female relatives of the *reth* or attendants of Nyikang wore the skins of female Mrs. Gray antelope. The *reth* himself wore one on the last two days of the ceremony. The chief of Gol Nyikang was observed on the morning of the first day's ceremonies wearing a black skin of the male Mrs. Gray. He soon changed to a female skin.

9. The *reth* was on a journey, and these were his attendants and his luggage. Nyikang had a similar retinue

10. The *reth's* sacred shield is a counterpart to that of Nyikang; like Nyikang's shield it should have been brought from Fashoda, but at the last moment it was forgotten.

11. The Kwa Otwot may originally have been a clan which has now died out. The prefix indicates an agnatic kinship group. They

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614 are not a clan now, and are messengers chosen *ad hoc*, as far as we could judge. *Twot* is the word used for the *reth's* messengers.

643 12. These messages amounted to a bargaining about how many cows the *reth* should give Nyikang. Whether the intention was to bribe Nyikang to come and instal the *reth*, or to persuade him to stay away because of his "holiness" is not clear. We incline to the latter [114] explanation, but Mr. McClure favours the former.

192 643 13. *Nyakwer*, meaning the girl, or woman, connected with the ceremonies, could be used of any individual female participant.

778 14. Our impression of those ceremonies witnessed by us was that Nyikang was held in manifest awe.

643 15. Cerfuc, and Kal wi Jang. Cerfuc is what the Shilluk say used to be a pool and is now filled up, but was carefully weeded for the occasion. Kal wi Jang, or Ujang, is 200 yards N.E. of Cerfuc.

778 16. All objects of great sanctity were covered in white cloth. The wrapping of cattle in cloth may merely signify their ritual value, and the necessity for screening them from the public gaze, but with all cattle it was evident how careful the Shilluk were to see that the animal was blindfold. After wrapping the animal the cloth itself was greatly prized as a sacred relic, being imbued with the sanctity of the animal.

173 778 17. Tradition says that the original stool was captured by the "Funy" and never returned. The present stool is a substitute. The cloth wrappings made it impossible to see the exact shape, but it had four legs, and appeared to be about twenty inches long and ten inches wide.

000 18. P. Munro. "The installation of the *reth* of the Chol". *S. N. R.* Vol. I, pp. 145 ff., reprinted as Appendix I in *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan* by C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, p. 546.

643 778 19. This remark shows that the property of the *reth* is also property of Nyikang—at least after the installation is completed. Actually the cattle paid to the Kwa Okelo belonged to Fafiti, but

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such is the spiritual oneness of Nyikang and all *reths* that their property is ultimately under the authority of Nyikang, and belongs to Nyikang. 643 778

20. There are two traditions about Cal. We think there must have been two sons of Nyikang called Cal. One is said to have been the second *reth* of the Shilluk, and the other is said never to have come to Shilluk country, but to have stayed behind in Uganda to become the ancestor of the Acholi. It was the latter tradition which was more in evidence in connexion with the effigy of Cal, but the former explanation might have been more reasonable. 773 778

21. It is the tradition that a man should be tied down between the opposing armies to be stepped over by the combatants. In 1903 however, at the time of the installation of *reth* Fadiet, a young man went to the Governor at Kodok, and petitioned him to forbid the *reth* to tie down his father to be stepped over. The Governor forbade this practice, for the danger of the man being trampled to death was considerable, and ordered that a bull be substituted. A bull was used at the installation of *reth* Fafiti as well, but now the petitioner of 1903 a man of the Kwa Nyidiang, whose duty it was to provide the man for tying down, asked if he might be tied down in place of the bull, for, he said, his defiance of the custom in 1903 had caused his family to sicken and die. Nyikang was consulted about this, but he said "If you wish to carry out the old custom, you must do it completely, and provide me with a girl to take back to Akurwa." The negotiations broke down, as no one would provide the girl, and a bull was substituted. But it was rather halfheartedly drawn across the battleground, and not tied down between the two armies. Seligman (*op. cit.* p. 95) suggested that the man should have been tied down at Khor Arepejur on the first day of the ceremonies. We think that he must have been wrongly informed by the Shilluk, in view of all the circumstances surrounding the hitch in this second mock battle. 197 643 648

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APPENDIX I.

DETAILS OF CHIEFS COMPOSING THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE.

631 643 666 The following chiefs composed the electoral college in 1943:-

1. Chief of Debalo Kwom (chief of Gol Nyikang).
2. ,, ,, Golbainy ,, ,, ,, Dhiang).
3. ,, ,, Mwomo.
4. ,, ,, Tonga.
5. ,, ,, Delal Ajak.
6. ,, ,, Bur Nyiliec (Athodwoi division).
7. ,, ,, Othecogo (Detwok division).
8. ,, ,, Fadit (Wau division).
9. ,, ,, Owaliny Obwa (Malakal division).
10. ,, ,, Adodo Dettim.
11. ,, ,, Fanyikang.
12. ,, ,, Acago (Detwok division).
13. ,, ,, Fadiang (Golbainy division).
14. ,, ,, Yoiny (Fashoda division).

Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 are explained adequately in the text.

[173] Nos. 5, 8, and 11 are the traditional big chiefs, whose ancestors held the *lan dwong* or "high robe of office" from Nyikang. They are still in possession of the *lan dwong*.

Nos. 7 and 10 have only recently been displaced by Government from the *lan dwong* owing to inefficiency. The *lan dwong* will naturally tend to revert to their lineages when a vacancy occurs.

Nos. 6 and 9 are chiefs with an ancient claim to the *lan dwong* which their ancestors possessed in the days of Nyikang. They have sunk into unimportance, because of the shrinkage of their lineage.

Nos. 12, 13 and 14 are the three Kwareth members.

Nos. 13, the chief of Fadiang, is looked upon as the chief of all the Kwareth.

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The Electoral College of 1903 consisted of 12, 13 and 14, 1, 2, 7, 8. (only seven names are given). 631 643 666

The Electoral College of 1917 consisted of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13. There also appeared the chief of Athodwoi, in place of the chief Bur Nyiliec (6), and the chiefs of Nyigir, Abienyai (in Detwok division), and Kodok. The chiefs of Bur Nyiliec, Owaliny Obwa, Fanyikang and Yoiny were not present. The chief of Abienyai may have represented the chief of Yoiny.

It is noteworthy that in 1917 the chiefs of Kwom and Golbainy and the Kwareth chiefs of Fadiang and Acago were all bribed by Coti Ajang, the pretender. This is an indication of who were the most influential chiefs in the college. N.B. The chief of Yoiny was not there to be bribed. [662]

APPENDIX II.

NYIKANG AND DAK, AND THE EQUIPMENT CARRIED WITH THEM.

Nyikang and Dak.

The effigy of Nyikang was made up of a tubular framework of bamboo rods covered with blue check imported cloth. The body at the top appeared to be about 14 inches in diameter tapering to about 9 inches. Wound round the top and tied in a knot like a cravat was a separate piece of cloth hanging down below the base of the body. On the first two days of Nyikang's journey this 'cravat' was of black cloth. When the party reached Golbainy, it was of the same blue check cloth as the body. The head of the effigy consisted of a mop-like plume of black ostrich feathers which hung down over the knot in the cravat. Overall the effigy was about 5 feet long. 643 778

The effigy of Dak was differently constructed. It consisted of a long bamboo pole, about 8 feet in length, with a cylindrical body of the same blue cloth some 2 foot 6 inches long, at the top of the pole. The head was made of a smaller bunch of black ostrich feathers than that of Nyikang.

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Personal Equipment.

643 778 The equipment carried by the Kwa Nyikwom for Nyikang and Dak consisted of the following.

[534] 1. *Drums.* There were two pairs of kettledrums; one was embellished with black ostrich feathers and rings around the edges, the other pair was made of plain wood. They were basin-shaped, and beaten with a distinctive rhythm as Nyikang proceeded. The original pair "Obuny" and "Cal" are said to have been captured, the former from the Arabs and the latter from the "Funy."

[411] 2. *Spears.* A collection of spears, sometimes three, and sometimes more, was carried. None of the spears carried was wrapped in cloth, as is usual with sacred spears.

[415] 3. *Cooking Pots and Baskets.* The pots were of the normal Shilluk types, and the baskets basin-shaped and covered with reed mats. There was generally a pair of each. These contained Nyikang's food for the journey.

4. *Nyikang's Bed.* A forked pole about 8 feet long with a circular leather flap hanging from the joint of the fork.

5. *Nyikang's Shield.* This was only produced from Aturwic wrapped in cloth. It did not come from Akurwa. It was apparently similar in shape to a normal Shilluk shield, but very much smaller.

6. *Ropes and Grass.* These were not strictly part of Nyikang's equipment, but were carried by the Kwa Nyikwom. The ropes were said to be made at the installation of *reth* Fafiti in 1917, and the grass and fibre which had been brought by Dak from Fanyikang were for the Kwa Nyikwom to make into new ropes for the new installation. These ropes, like the whips carried by the Kwa Nyikwom, were used for warding off the inquisitive

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APPENDIX III.

(W.P.G.T.)

List of Clans Participating in the Initiation Ceremonies.

References are made to the list of Shilluk clans in Westermann. 614
The Shilluk People pp. 128-134. 643

Kwa Mal. The clan which claims the privilege of sowing cowrie shells in the path of the *reth* on his journey from Debalo to Arepejur. Westermann lists them as 2 and 2a, but assigns to them the functions which we believe are performed by Kwa Nyikwom.

Kwa Nyikang. The clan which provides the ceremonial blacksmiths for the royal spears. Westermann lists them as No. 8, but assigns to them a different function. The duties of Westermann's No. 60, Kwa Anut, seem similar (the making of fire by friction).

Kwa Okelo. The clan charged with producing the small girl, *nyakwer*, for the ceremonial marriage. Westermann lists them as No. 24, not No. 15.

Kwa Nyikir. The clan responsible for the management of the funeral dance; called by Westermann Kwa Nyikai and listed as No. 65.

Kwa Nyikwom. The high priests of Nyikang at Akurwa, who carry Nyikang to Fashoda, and tend his shrine. They drive off intruders with whips on the way to Fashoda. Not listed by Westermann, though his No. 2, "Kwa Lek" has similar functions

Kwa Ojul. The clan which produces the heifer for the journey rom Debalo to Fashoda. Not listed by Westermann.

Kwa Wung. The clan responsible for beating the drum which applauds approved speeches on the last day of the installation ceremonies. Westermann lists Kwa Wan as No. 44.

Note. We find that this list of clans given by Westermann betrays marks of haste. He assigns one home for most clans. While the clans are generally to be found in the places he mentions, several other lineages of the same clan are frequently found elsewhere [114]

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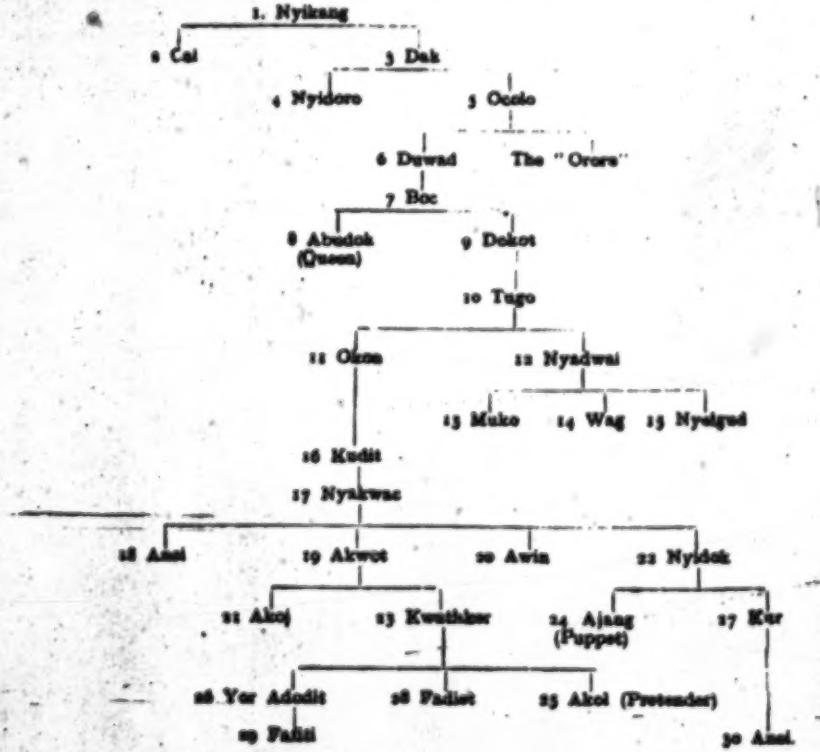
APPENDIX IV.

List of Shilluk Reths.

173 As given by Pumphrey (*op. cit.*) and Seligman, *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan* p. 44.

This supersedes the earlier list given by Seligman in "The Cult of Nyikang and the Divine Kings of the Shilluk" p. 218.



NOTE.

[104] The spelling has been altered in a few important cases to bring it more in line with the decisions of the Rejaf Conference.

The tradition is only sound as far back as *reth* Tugo (10).

There is a doubt about Cal (2) as to whether he was *reth*, or whether he stayed behind at the time of Nyikang's migration to become the leader of the Acholi.

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